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ABSTRACT

Papers for the fifth Foundation for Endangered Languages (FEL) Conference include the following papers: "The State and the Global Marketplace in the Provision of Minority Media Services" (George Jones); "Local Language Media: What Does It Take?" (Paul Lewis); "Power of the Media for the Good of Small Languages: An Indian Experience of Enriching Diversity" (Lachman Khubchandani); "Language Protection and Cultural Policy in France" (Samira El Atia and Douglas Kibbee); "The Virtual Village Square: Media in Minority Languages in the Process of Media Diversification and Globalisation: An Example from Southern Carinthia (Austria)" (Brigitta Busch); "Maintenance and Promotion of Berber: The Role of the Electronic Media" (Jilali Saib); "Language in the Media Environment of the Florida Seminole" (Thomas Sawallis); "Indigenous Presence in the Nicaraguan Media: The Mayanga" (Elena Benedicto, Ely Frank, Pulinario Sebastian, Simon Avelino); "Promoting the Maintenance of Endangered Languages through the Internet: The Case of Tamazight" (Mohamed Ouakrim); "The Role of Language in the Construction of Ethnic Identity on the Internet: The Case of Assyrian Activists in Diaspora" (Erica McClure); "Frisian All over the World: The Unique Experience of One Year" (Onno Falkena); "Television News Bullesins in Forest Nenets" (Tapani Salminen); "Nyae Nyae Revisited: the Village Schools Project in Northern Namibia" (Joe Pfaffe and Susan Schulman); "Is Language Shift to English Imminent amongst Afrikaans Speakers in Rehoboth Gebiet?" (Annatjie Louw); "Funding an 'Ethnic Diversity' Public Access Television Program in the USA" (Helene E. Hagan); "The Use of Different Media in Reversing Language Shift: Nahua Illustrations" (Jose Flores Farfan); "Geographic Center for Interactive Interdisciplinary Information" (Mark L. Chamberlin and Heno Sarv); "The New Vibrations of Traditional Teueikan" (Bernard Hervieux); "Basque in the Media" (Asuncion Martinez Arbelaiz); Tarahumara Ritual Spectacle in Noriahuachi: Visual Metaphor Experienced Through Mass Media" (Julia Lonergan and Patricia

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Small); "Across the Andean Airwaves: Satellite Radio Broadcasting in Quechua" (Aurolyn Luykx); "Le sort de la langue berbere a travers la deformation et la transformation du nom propre berbere" (Abdallah El Mountassir); and "Silenced or Liberated: Endangered Languages in the European Union" (Helena Drysdale). Individual papers contain references. (KFT)

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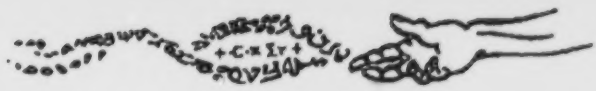

FOUNDATION FOR ENDANGERED LANGUAGES

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Proceedings of the Fifth FEL Conference

20—23 September 2001

Agadir, Morocco

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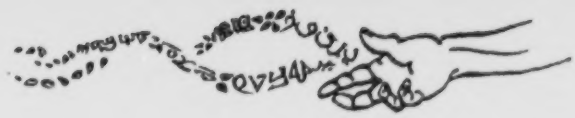

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Endangered Languages and the Media

Proceedings of the Fifth FEL Conference

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20—23 September 2001

Editors:

Christopher Moseley
Nicholas Ostler
Hassan Ouzzate

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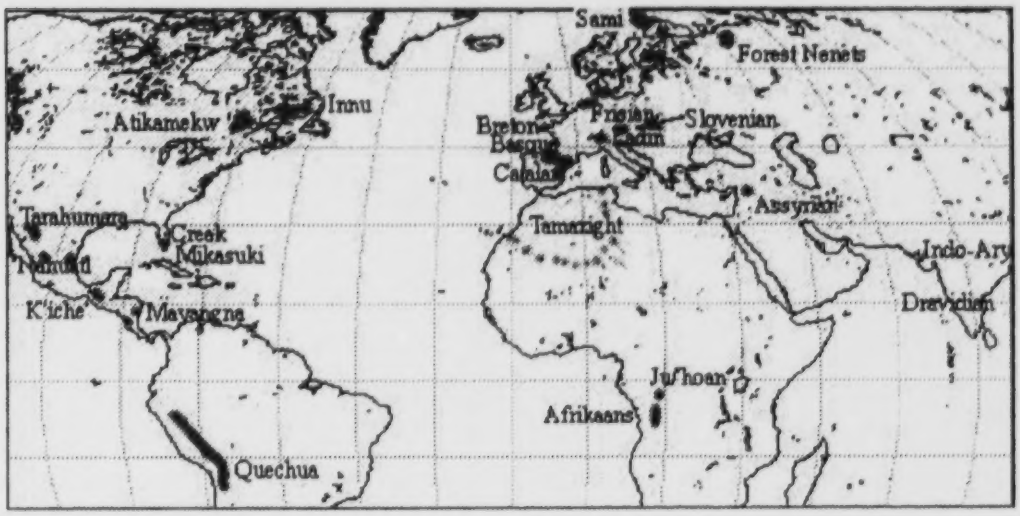

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Endangered Languages and the Media

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Among the most powerful instruments of the process we have come to know as "globalization" are the mass media. Through the medium of the written and spoken word, the increasingly concentrated ownership of the world's mass media exercises a strong influence on the hearts and minds of all but the very remotest of the world's languages. The pattern of use and control of the world's press and broadcasting has shifted even faster than the speed of shrinkage of the world's minority languages.

What exactly is the relationship between the globalization of the media and increased pressure on minority languages? Is there a hopeful side, as the cost and technology bases of the media are revolutionized? The fifth international conference of the Foundation for Endangered Languages aims to pinpoint the processes and seek new tactics for coping with them: hoping, at the very least, to channel some of the power of the media for the good of small languages.

When we sent out our call for papers, we were looking for answers to many questions, not all of them obvious. For example:

- What effect does the global availability of satellite broadcasting have on the world's smaller languages?
- What is the meaning of a free press if some languages are denied a voice in it?
- Must the Internet inevitably exclude smaller languages from access to the electronic media, or is it ultimately a force for diversity?
- Is a big fashionable metropolitan language always the guarantee of commercial success in the music recording industry?
- How can speakers of minority languages get access to training in journalism?
- Is it the state's responsibility to subsidize broadcasting in minority languages? Why?
- What happens when emigrant communities abroad are better served by media in their new country than those from their old home?

These, then, were our questions. This volume contains many of the answers that we received.

The topic *of Endangered Language and the Media* seems to have been timely: we have received far more responses than for any of our previous calls, and as a result we were only able to request a full paper from a fraction of those who submitted abstracts. The successful abstracts came from five continents, and it is pleasing to note that a map of half the world, centred on Agadir, is a good way of reviewing the locations of all the languages that they treat. (Have a look at the map on page 6.)

We have organized the papers around different sub-themes, beginning and ending with those that are explicitly wide-ranging, and focusing down in between on issues that emerge from studies of particular language situations.

As in previous years, we have found that our local language, this time Tamazight (often known as Berber), is represented under various guises at various points in the programme. It is a cardinal point for the Foundation that different small languages can illuminate each other: so our sections do not have any specific regional focus.

The conference begins with a keynote address by George Jones, in which the situation of the new French/Breton TV channel, TV Breizh is examined: this is symptomatic of our new era where globalized private enterprise is increasingly influential, with implications for older State-dominated services. This is followed by two general pieces: one by Paul Lewis reviewing the practical challenges in setting up new media for local languages; the other by Lachman Khubchandani, stressing the potential benefits if local languages can be

brought into the national media, and looking for evidence of this in the experience of the media in India.

Three papers look at the question of *how the State caters for national minorities.* El Atia and Kibbee's review of the actual performance of France's much maligned policy towards minority-languages is followed by Brigitta Busch's assessment of the success of Slovenian-language broadcasting in Austria. Jilali Saib suggests that the media, both through broadcasting and electronic networking, may offer a new channel for the State to deliver support to Tamazight, potentially more effective that a traditional model that would require educational changes.

The focus then turns to *what small language communities can do for themselves.* Tom Sawallis believes that the small Floridian languages Creek and Mikasuki could be revitalized by timely use of print, broadcast and electronic media, and makes some concrete suggestions. Benedicto, Frank, Sebastián and Avelino compare the success of print and broadcast for their home language, Mayangna in Nicaragua, and find that without a literate tradition, broadcast is more effective.

Print and broadcast have been with us for a long time. But *cyber-space* is still fairly new, and the next section considers its *prospects for the smaller language.* Mohamed Ouakrim evaluates past Internet contributions to the success of Tamazight, ending hopefully; Erica McClure describes a language, Assyrian, where Internet support has become crucial to the continuance of a community; and Onno Falkena gives an insider's view of the new Frisian web-site *Omropfryslan.*

In the *Open Forum,* a traditional feature of FEL conferences, we are offered a wide range of stories: by Salminen on Forest Nenets news broadcasts; Pfaffe and Schulman on the faltering of a Village School project for the Bushman language Ju/'hoan; Louw on government action prejudicial to Afrikaans in Namibia; Hagan on the trials of ethnic diversity programme-making in the USA; Flores on experience with new media to support Nahuatl in Mexico; and Chamberlin and Sarv, proposing a new use of Geographic Information Services to pool information among language communities.

One hopeful possibility is that the media may act as *new carriers of ancient traditions,* stepping in to reinforce links that may be weakening. Bernard Hervieux sees this happening in the Innu and Atikamek" communities of north-eastern Canada. Martínez is cautious about how the Basque traditions can be sustained in moving from print to electronic media. Lonergan and Small's paper is itself a reflexion of an attempt to project a part of Tarahumara culture through non-traditional media.

Finally, we look at some very different issues that transcend individual states, and the languages that they may shelter. Luykx considers the hitherto underplayed role for radio in the use of the Quechua languages across various Andean states. Abdallah El Mountassir considers the subversive effect that the Arabic language milieu has had on the understanding of Tamazight proper names. And Helen Drysdale explores the huge disparity in mass media available to non-state languages within the European Union.

The linguistic diversity that there is in the world is the result of the fact that parties of human beings have been able, over perhaps 100 thousand years, to establish themselves in every part of every continent except Antarctica. They did this in small groups, and prospered (when they did) separately. Their languages are the fruit of temporal links from generation to generation, developing and elaborating as each community made sense of the part of the world in which it was making its living. Humanity was global, but not globalized.

Now all that has changed. The progress, at first gradual, of world-shrinking technologies (such as the wheel, roads, horse-domestication, writing, ships, the compass, the clock, and printing — and the development of weapons kept well up to the same pace) first made secluded survival very hard. The advent of broadcasting, orbital satellites and electronic networks in the last century have made it almost impossible.

Can the delicate benefits of all those separate cultures, preserved and fostered by their languages, be defended with the same inventions that have put them in danger? Evidently they will have to change in some ways if they are going to pull this off.

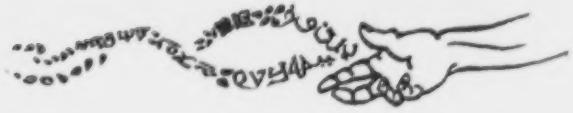
But a future just like the past in which they grew is not an option.

Acknowledgements

Besides ourselves, the Programme Committee this year consisted of Tony Woodbury, Mahendra Verma, Tasaku Tsunoda, Karl Teeter, Janig Stephens, Jane Simpson, Patricia Shaw, Blair Rudes, Jon Reyhner, David Nash, Eugene McKendry, Alasdair MacCaluim, Karen Johnson-Weiner, Davyth Hicks, Louanna Furbee, Nigel Birch and Paul Baker; and the Editors thank them for help in evaluating the abstracts, and offering guidance to authors.

The Foundation also thanks the authors of these papers for contributing their work; and all those who by their charitable contributions have strengthened our abilities to act in favour of endangered languages.

Last but not least, the Foundation expresses very special thanks to Dr Hassan Aourid and the Tarik Ibn Zyad Center, of Morocco, for their valuable support.



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Setting the Scene:

Our Place in the Media

The State and the Global Marketplace in the Provision of Minority Media Services

George Jones
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Abstract

Globalised media challenge the hitherto airtight broadcasting spaces of the state. Should minorities welcome this or will sight be lost of minorities in an environment where commercial considerations are paramount? An unusual case relating to these questions is the bilingual French/Breton satellite channel, TV Breizh. The channel having been on the air for only a few months, there is already debate about how much it is possible to believe in the commitment of a private, advertising-dependent venture to a minority language and culture. It will be argued that in a context where the state attitude to minority language broadcasting has been unremittingly intransigent, the intervention of private, global operators is to be welcomed, albeit with no illusions. Scepticism of the motivation behind TV Breizh may be justified. However, even if its Breton language output is insubstantial, it has already outstripped that of the French state channel, F3. The intensified competition for audiences may put some extra pressure on F3 with regard to Breton. However, it is clear that minority languages cannot be left to depend on market forces and the role of state broadcasters remains crucial. F3 must not be thought to be 'let off the hook' by TV Breizh.

State-based background of minority language broadcasting

Minority language television broadcasting has, of course, developed predominantly within the context of state broadcasting. Indeed, until recently, in many states broadcasting of whatever kind was the exclusive province of the state and this has often had negative consequences for minority languages in that the state-building project often meant indifference or hostility towards minorities. On the other hand, where private, commercially-driven broadcasting has been permitted it has generally offered even less fertile ground for minority languages. Minority languages have not constituted an attractive medium for organisations whose primary concerns are commercial. Speakers may appeal to their rights as citizens where state broadcasting (often funded from some form of licensing) is concerned, although this may or may not bring about what they demand, but in a commercial context it has been harder to find any leverage whereby minority provision would be obtained. While there are some examples where fairly complete services have been provided within a state context (e.g. in Basque, Catalan and Galician in the Spanish state), there are very few examples of any substantial minority language provision in the private sector.

Destablisation of the state hegemony

The process of globalisation has been a major factor hastening the destabilisation of the control of the state over broadcasting. In some countries private sector broadcasting had already been permitted but globalisation renders it more difficult still for the state to police its audiovisual spaces. The technological possibilities for transnational delivery of media products are a major factor in this regard. An example is the history of the Kurdish television channel Med TV. Kurdish speakers in their homeland have no access to television broadcasting so in 1995 a group of Kurdish business people set up a satellite channel with headquarters in London and Brussels and beamed a television service into Kurdistan. This met with furious opposition from the Turkish government who attempted, among other tactics, to block the satellite transmissions. The venture was short lived and encountered many legal and diplomatic problems but it is a dramatic example of the way in which the nation state's control of the audiovisual domain is facing new challenges[1]. The challenges are not always as direct as this example but are present nevertheless.

TV Breizh

There are exceptions to the rule that European minority language broadcasting provision comes primarily from the state sector and one of these has come about recently not, interestingly enough in, say, German-speaking south Tyrol, one minority language community which has been in a sufficiently strong position to support commercial provision but rather in what is arguably one of the most endangered of Europe's languages, namely Breton. The recently established TV Breizh broadcasts the majority of its output in French but about 20 hours per week are also broadcast in Breton. It is significant that this development should have happened in the French state, where the traditions and structures of the Jacobin model make it one of the few places where the state has less to offer than the private sector. F3 the state regional channel broadcasts only 1.6 hours per week. However, while the advent of this new channel was warmly welcomed by many, some have raised questions about the degree to which

[1] For an account of the Med TV project by the channel's director, see *Mercator Media Forum 3*.

commitment to either Breton language or culture can be expected from a commercially-led enterprise. The shareholders of the channel include two well-known global operators, namely Murdoch and Berlusconi, who have between them 26% of the shares. The involvement of Berlusconi in particular has been another cause of controversy.

TV Breizh's Schedule

As mentioned above, some 20 hours of Breton per week are currently broadcast on TV Breizh. Sixteen of these are children's programmes which are available with two different sound tracks, one Breton and one French. Most of the animated material for children is dubbed in Breton with only a few items being produced in-house, such as, for example, some very short (less than 30 seconds or so) snaps with Meldu, the channel's mascot. In addition a talk-show is broadcast in Breton. This programme lasts half an hour and goes out two or three times a week. This is broadcast in Breton on both sound tracks and subtitled in French. France has no facility for concealed teletext subtitles and so the French subtitles must be seen by all viewers. The subtitling is labour-intensive and costs the relevant department about three days work per week. This talk-show is soon to be discontinued, however, and it is not clear what plans there are to replace it. Some of the magazine programmes 'Arvor' and 'Argoad' were initially partly bilingual but these have now been discontinued. The reason given by the channel's head of programming is the lack of trained bilingual journalists and the fact that they were produced by independent production companies on whom TV Breizh felt it could not impose extra costs. Sport is also available in Breton and is presented in the same manner as the children's programmes, i.e. with Breton on one sound track and French on the other. There is about one football match per fortnight during the relevant season. Weather bulletins are done bilingually and at first a certain amount of advertising went out in Breton but this has tailed off.

It is noteworthy that news has not so far been carried in Breton, although the stated intention is to begin with a daily bulletin in September at prime time. Since before the channel was launched there has been mention of dubbing films into Breton; indeed this was one of the four areas designated a priority for Breton language output by the head of programming, along with children's programmes, football matches and historical documentaries. So far the films and documentaries have not appeared but the the head of programming says that he hopes to dub a few films by the end of the year, giving priority to films featuring life in small communities or historical films. The film Braveheart is among those being considered for dubbing. Cartoons for children were, according to the channel, considered a better option for the training of dubbing actors initially.

It is possible that the fact that news has not been prioritised is a reflection of the fact that this is one of the few areas which is covered by the Breton language output of F3. It also seems that TV Breizh may have been deliberately avoiding direct competition with F3 at this stage. As it stands the channel's output complements that of F3 which has done virtually nothing in terms of children's programming.

At present, then, the emphasis does seem to be on not alienating French-speaking viewers, and understandably so, given that subscription figures are still low. Nothing on the channel is currently broadcast in Breton only. It is either available in French on one of the sound-tracks or is subtitled in French.

The focus on children's programmes and sport has parallels in other minority language broadcasting services. These are precisely the sorts of programmes which constitute a substantial portion of the output of ETB-1, the publicly funded Basque language television channel. There are probably several factors which would lead a broadcaster to make these choices particularly in the early days of a venture when less can be risked. One of these is the fact that a fairly substantial audience can be relatively safely predicted for both sport and children's programmes. Both may even attract many viewers who do not have full competence in the language. Children's programmes are a particularly recyclable genre, cartoons being infinitely repeatable.

TV Breizh's dubbing operation, even so far, where it has only been a case of children's animations has been highly expensive. Things are currently in a state of flux since at the time of writing it seems public money may soon be voted to help with that aspect.

Commitment to Breton or Marketing Ploy?

There has been disappointement expressed in some quarters with the Breton language output of TV Breizh and indeed even a good deal of scepticism in advance of the facts about what its level of commitment to either Breton language or culture would be. The argument goes that where commercial considerations are paramount they will rule out any real commitment to Breton. It has been said that Patrick le Lay, the channel's founder is a skilled player on the susceptibilities of those who have aspirations with regard to Breton language broadcasting. The choice of name does seem to imply that TV Breizh wants to be seen as very much involved with the language and when, some months after the start of broadcasting there is only twenty hours per week out of a total of some 112 hours of broadcasting it is possible to see why some have been disappointed.

Patrick Lasbleiz, in Breizh-Info 1.11.00 wrote:

Il me semble que Le Lay et ses amis se préoccupent bien plus de vouloir faire du pognon avec des bretonnités et des celtitudes plutôt que de promouvoir les cultures celtique en général et bretonne en particulier. Mais, après tout, c'est leur raison de vivre à ces gens-là : faire du fric avec n'importe quoi. La Bretagne fait vendre [...].

(It seems to me that Le Lay and his friends are far more concerned with making money out of Breton and Celtic things than with promoting Celtic culture in general or Breton culture in particular. But then, that is the raison d'être of these people: making money out of whatever Brittany sells [...]).

And professor Jacques Guyot, referring to the fact that two of the channel's shareholders are Murdoch and Berlusconi, says the following in *Mercator Media Forum 5*:

Peu réputés pour investir à fonds perdu, vraisemblablement peu sensibles aux charmes de la musique bretonne et sans doute totalement étrangers aux enjeux politiques et culturels de la décentralisation, ce qui intéresse les deux patrons d'entreprises multimédiatiques, c'est avant tout la dynamique culturelle régionale quand celle-ci permet de trouver de nouveaux débouchés.

(Not known for investing money they will never get back, probably not susceptible to the charms of Breton music and doubtless total strangers to the political and cultural matters at issue with regard to decentralisation, what interests the two bosses of multimedia enterprises is mainly the cultural and regional dynamic when it allows them to find new outlets).

It is worth noting, however, that even if one does, as some have, regard the Breton element in TV Breizh as more or less a marketing ploy and merely tokenistic, the channel's Breton output already substantially outstrips that of the state regional channel F3. From September 2000 to September 2001 F3 broadcast approximately 85 hours in Breton, or an average of some 1.6 hours per week. This consisted of some six minutes per day of news six days a week; and a couple of magazine programmes, one on Saturday lasting about 26 minutes and one on Sunday lasting some 35 minutes. There are also occasional other items such as music etc. A few cartoons have been dubbed and this may indeed indicate that F3 is beginning to respond to the pressure deriving from the existence of TV Breizh. It is worth noting also, however, that where everything available on TV Breizh is available in French either through subtitling or the use of the two sound tracks, not all the Breton output on F3 is always subtitled. The Saturday magazine programme is subtitled but news usually is not.

However things are with regard to the place of Breton on TV Breizh and however they may yet turn out to be, two things are quite striking - the rapidity with which some have taken a position on this channel (it had barely been on the air two months when Patrick Lasbleiz penned his remarks) and the degree to which those commenting on it do so in ideological terms, with the rhetoric of left versus right occurring frequently. Prof. Guyot in his piece in Mercator Media Forum acknowledges that it is too early to judge the channel in terms of content and restricts himself therefore to analysing the public discourse of those involved in it. The very nature of the channel is perceived as politically contentious before it has even got up to full speed in terms of its broadcasting practices, with those on the left critical both of the channel itself and of those who unequivocally welcome it.

The founder of TV Breizh, Patrick Le Lay is also director of the French commercial channel TF1, not famous for being strong on 'cultural' content. He is in fact a media magnate perceived rather as Rupert Murdoch is perceived elsewhere and the association with Murdoch himself and Berlusconi can only intensify this. These attributes make him a not unexpected target of criticism from those on the left. The fact that he chose to announce the launch of the channel at the Institute of Locarn, which is associated in many people's minds with the right-wing adds further fuel to the fire.

The point where issues of Breton language and culture meet the politics of left versus right is an explosive one and has been so since the end of the Second World War when many involved in the Breton nationalist movement were accused of collaboration with the German occupiers. The extent to which this was or was not true has been the subject of endless and extremely bitter debate but it seems likely that, while it may have been true of some, this aspect has been exaggerated by the enemies of Breton nationalism who have sought to exploit the taint of suspected collaboration. Lest it seem improbable that this issue may still be having repercussions today, it is worth noting that the independent Breton language school named after Roparz Hemon, one of those accused of such collaboration, has been more or less forced to rename itself recently. Add the fact that Roparz Hemon was himself involved in an early Breton radio broadcasting project and it is easy to see the relevance of the discourse deriving from the 1940s to the current situation. It is difficult for a project involved with Breton language broadcasting (or Breton language anything) not to be seen by many through the prism of the immediate post-war events. In the minds of many the Breton language remains a highly ideological issue. Some reject the language because of their left wing orientation and the Breton nationalist movement is frequently accused of crypto-fascism. It is likely, therefore, that even some of those involved in Breton language and nationalist issues will be keen to distance themselves from any elements which might be interpreted in this way.

There are many, of course, beyond Brittany who are critical of Murdoch and Berlusconi and who would be unlikely to welcome a television channel in which either was involved. It seems that the post-war discourse specific to Brittany may be magnifying this, however. It is intriguing to look at some of the rhetoric used by Patrick Lasbleiz further on in the same letter quoted above:

On savait la Bretagne "terre de mission" pour l'extrême droite française, on remarquera avec quelle délicatesse l'Opus Dei s'est introduite dans l'Emsav (avec du beurre, c'est bien meilleur!). Quoi, j'ai dit un gros mot? L'Opus Dei a disparu par enchantement de l'Institut de Locarn? Il a suffi de claquer des doigts et hop! En fait, c'est un peu comme la Guardia Civil qui est devenue subitement vertueuse après la mort de Franco!

(We knew that Brittany was a special project for the French extreme right, it will be noted how delicately Opus Dei worked its way into the Breton nationalist movement (with a little sugar on the pill). What, have I said a rude word? Has Opus Dei magically disappeared from the Locarn Institute? One had only to click one's fingers and that was that! Indeed it is rather like the Guardia Civil which suddenly became virtuous afterFranco's death!

To those on the outside, the references to Franco and the Spanish police may seem overblown in the context but when one bears in mind the discourse which underlies the debate, it becomes clearer why such a reference might be used.

TV Breizh's Dubbing Project and the Cultural Question

So far the greatest part of TV Breizh's Breton output is children's programming and a substantial portion of this consists of dubbed animations. It is not uncommon for minority language broadcasters to take this course of action in their early days when finance is at a premium and trained media professionals competent in the language are thin on the ground. It raises the question, however, to what extent a broadcaster functioning in this way is supporting the culture which goes with the language in question. TV Breizh's critics will be quick to point out any shortcomings with regard to the channel's cultural commitment as well as its language practices and so far it would appear to be quite vulnerable to any such critique. This aspect of the debate is somewhat more elusive, however. What precisely constitutes Breton culture in any case is somewhat harder to define than the language. It may, of course, be disappointing if the channel offers little more than material dubbed from other languages. Nevertheless, minority and, increasingly, majority broadcasters juggle with questions relating to the use of culturally 'foreign' material all the time. Since many speakers of minority languages are anxious to reject conservative definitions of their culture, the use of some Japanese cartoons and Hollywood films may not be a bad thing, depending on the place they occupy in the overall schedule.

Conclusions

It is difficult to gauge long-term commitment to Breton language and culture when TV Breizh has been on the air, at the time of writing, for less than a year. A smattering of Breton has been used by others to entice viewers before; Jacques Guyot has suggested that the first Breton broadcasts may have been included in state television chiefly in order to encourage people to buy television sets in the 1960s when television in France was undergoing a rapid expansion[2]. While this has increased slightly over the years it has to this day not developed into a comprehensive Breton service. Rozenn Milin, the channel's director, has herself said that TV Breizh cannot make guarantees about its schedule far into the future[3]. It is also probably true that players such as Berlusconi and Murdoch are not, as prof. Jacques Guyot put it, particularly concerned with the charms of Breton music but I would argue that, under the circumstances, a development such as TV Breizh is to be welcomed, albeit with no illusions. The fact is that it has already significantly increased the amount of Breton available on television, even if the language is not particularly central to its schedule. Where previously only 1.6 hours per week were broadcast in Breton, 20 hours per week represents an enormous percentage increase. Furthermore, these broadcasts have complemented rather than duplicated the Breton output of F3, focusing primarily on children's television, an area in which F3 had done next to nothing. Global operators have learnt that they must find ways of localising and encouraging different audiences to identify with them. TV Breizh may indeed be part of TF1's project to conquer new markets and the use of Breton language and identity may simply be a means to an end as the use of various Indian local languages is for Murdoch's enterprises elsewhere. The fact remains however, that French state television has felt little need to use Breton even for self-serving purposes and if private global operators will even partially fill the gap then so much the better. This need on the part of global operators to promote audience identification may indeed constitute the leverage that minorities can exert in the market place. That is not to say that the state should be let off the language hook nor that the notion of citizens' rights to media provision in their own language should be given up, merely that pragmatically, minorities must take what they can from where they can. The role of the state in imposing a public service obligation is still central to minority language broadcasting in most cases and minorities clearly cannot be left to market forces. The fact that private, global operators have outstripped the

[2] See Guyot and Michon in *Mercator Media Forum 3*.
[3] See Interview with Rozenn Milin in *Hopala!*, issue 5.

state's provision in a state where regionalism is severely underdeveloped nevertheless points to interesting possibilities. A global media landscape, such as that which permits the participation of foreign media operators in the provision of a Breton service, may be one in which it is easier for minority languages to find a niche than was the case when broadcasting was entirely state-specific and state-controlled. Although it is not clear to what extent it will actually happen, there are in theory, at least, new possibilities of private global operators seeing an opportunity where nation states leave certain groups uncatered-for. The fact that they will be doing so for their own ends does not mean that there are not advantages to be gained. There is the danger which must be guarded against that this could be interpreted as letting the state media off the hook. It is also possible, however, that with the increased competition for audiences, such state media may be prompted to counter a development like TV Breizh by making more use of minority languages themselves.

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Local Language Media: What Does It Take?

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Abstract

The development of a local language media, particularly audio-visual materials, can be a significant force in enhancing the prestige and perceived value of an endangered language. There are, however, significant challenges to the process which must be considered. This paper provides a general overview of the opportunities and challenges related to such a project. Linguistic and sociolinguistic challenges include the dynamics of diglossic situations, where the functional assignment of the languages must be considered and appropriate innovations in those functions implemented. In addition, the impact of the introduction of media technology, appropriateness of the content (both textual and visual), as well as the financial issues related to production costs, equipment acquisition and maintenance, and distribution of media products are considered.

Further, it is not enough for media merely to be introduced. Production and distribution capabilities must be sustained and implemented in such a way as to be sustainable without excessive dependence on outside financial and technological expertise. This, perhaps more than any other factor, affects the kind of media approaches which may be deemed appropriate for any given situation.

Introduction

The development of a local language media, particularly audio-visual materials, as part of a larger language development effort, can be a significant force in enhancing the prestige and perceived value of an endangered language. While the development of a local language literature and literacy is a fairly well understood and clearly defined process, the development of a local language audio-visual media is less well understood and presents a number of challenges on several fronts which need to be addressed.

In the development of written literature, one important parameter to consider is the degree of authenticity of the written materials. Wendell (1982) has identified four stages in the development of literature among preliterate groups. These stages represent differing degrees of familiarity of author and reader with the content of the written material. See Figure 1.

This classificatory scheme can be described using a continuum that goes from locally-authored literature that contains content which is familiar to the society at one end of the continuum all the way to translation of linguistically and culturally foreign materials at the other end. As one moves along this continuum new sets of skills and levels of sophistication are required by both author and reader. The introduction of literacy in a local language requires the use of a long-established set of technologies (paper, books, writing, ink, printing, etc.) which is adaptable in various ways to almost any cultural setting.

Stage 1	Content completely familiar to authors and readers
Stage 2	New Content experienced by the author
Stage 3	New Content experienced vicariously by the author
Stage 4	New Content translated from another language by the author

Figure 1: Stages in Literature Development (from Wendell, 1982)

Audio-visual media, on the other hand, involve a wider range of technologies and a far more complex mix of these technologies. Audio-visual media can be purely audio distributed in various ways (live presentations and recitations, cassette recordings, radio – both live and recorded – recordings on CD-ROM, downloaded MP3 files, etc.) or they can include a combination of both audio and visual components, whether print (posters, flip charts, flashcards, etc.) or non-print, (puppets, drama, filmstrip, film, videotape, downloaded streaming video, etc.)

It is apparent that there are also important distinctions that can be observed between live and recorded materials, between purely oral materials, and oral presentations of written materials (e.g. readings of poetry, scripts, stories, etc.) and all of these with or without accompanying visuals (illustrations with or without text, visuals of the text itself, etc.).

These technologies are also adaptable and can be used in a variety of ways, but we have far less experience with the adaptive process and so have far fewer ready answers. Nevertheless, like written literature, the same sort of distinctions can be made in the development of local language media products between stage one locally authored and stage four translated materials but the process is considerably more complex in that not only are there issues of linguistic and rhetorical sophistication to be considered, but also issues of technological and visual sophistication, as well as ideology and economics.

This paper identifies five areas in which those working in language development and/or revitalization will face challenges to the development of a local language audio-visual media. I describe those challenges and propose

some possible ways to overcome obstacles and develop a culturally authentic and locally owned media.
The five areas to be considered are: (1) the challenge of a cross-cultural media, (2) the challenge of a sustainable media, (3) the challenge of a technologically appropriate media, (4) the challenge of a financially viable media, and (5) the challenge of a sociolinguistically authentic media. While each of these are dealt with separately and in sequence, it must be recognized that they are closely related and intertwined topics of discussion which, in practice, can not be dealt with in isolation from each other. In addition, quite often the factors seem to work against each other with the "simplest" approach in one area requiring higher levels of sophistication in another.

The Challenge of a Cross-Cultural Media

One of the challenges of media is that it is multi-channeled consisting of both visual and audio stimuli. Producers of media in local languages need to concern themselves not only with the language of the script but also with the cultural content of the visual component.

Where locally-authored, produced and acted media are being produced, both of these channels can be attended to since the script (ideally) is being written by native speakers of the language who are full participants in the culture. Similarly for dramatic productions, the sets, props, costumes, sound effectsand stage direction are all coming from the social matrix of the intended audience. This would lead us to believe that, ideally, local-language media should begin (and perhaps end) with locally-written, produced, directed, and acted or voiced media products. The challenge, however, is that mounting such productions, particularly those using more sophisticated modern technologies, quite often requires quite sophisticated literary skills as well as an investment in resources and equipment that may be beyond the reach of local peoples.

The most significant implication of this fact is that unlike literature, where often the easiest starting point is with locally-authored stories about content that is familiar, in audio-visual media, such productions are often the most difficult to begin with since they may require the development of new literary genres (radio or screen plays) higher levels of technological sophistication and significant financial resources. Far more frequently, the initial introduction of media in local languages begins at the other end of the continuum with foreign productions which are adapted (usually by translating and dubbing the script) for use in the local language.

These translated and dubbed productions are subject to the usual translation problems which are well known (mistranslations, unclear and ambiguous renderings, etc.) but also have other challenges that must be addressed particularly in regard to the visual content, it's appropriateness for the local culture, and it's intelligibility to local audiences.

Visual images which are brought in from the outside, may show people behaving in ways that are at best incomprehensible and at worst objectionable. Gestures, the proximity of actors to each other (particularly men and women), the clothing the actors are wearing and other cultural manifestations may cause inexperienced viewers to wonder or be offended. In addition, actors may be portrayed engaging in activities appropriate only for members of the opposite sex or of another age cohort, such as harvesting, caring for children, shopping or driving a vehicle or activities which are not appropriate for public viewing at all (romantic or sexual activity).

The degree to which the cross-cultural nature of imported media may represent an obstacle to clear communication is in large measure related to the level of contact that the target audience has with outsiders, with media products of various types, and to what degree they have learned how media functions.

I have had personal experience with a young, illiterate Mayan man living in an urban setting in Guatemala who had many years of exposure to film, television, radio and other media types. On one occasion, he was perplexed when watching a video to see a well-known American actor portraying a criminal and engaging in cruel and illegal activities. That same actor had been a long-time star of a television series where he portrayed a police officer and which the Mayan young man watched frequently. Our Mayan friend couldn't believe that the man he knew as an upright defender of the law would change his moral character so drastically. In spite of his long experience watching various kinds of media, he still had not grasped the fundamental notion that what he was seeing were fictitious portrayals and that the people were acting. His understanding was that video and television provided him with a window into the actual lives of the people he was viewing.

In contrast to that understanding of what media is all about, we also have evidence that the format of the visual imagery can affect the viewer's understanding of the truth and factuality of the message. Film and video may use human actors, but like print media, they might also use animation or cartoons. In some cultures, it may be understood that animated visual content is fictitious or playful and not to be taken seriously. If animated media are to be introduced (and dubbed) it would be wise to investigate what inferences the audience might draw from its use. If the spoken text accompanying such visuals is intended to inform or educate, it may be at odds with the visual presentation and thus be less effective, or worse taken as pure fiction.

As an example of this potential for mismatch between the visual and the textual, the U.S. government has available for dubbing a series of videos on health and hygiene. These animated videos use various Disney characters to talk about important heath matters such as the prevention of typhoid and malaria, the importance of clean water, etc. In some situations, they have been judged as essentially useless because the audience would never accept that Mickey Mouse or Goofy might be telling them something they should actually believe and act upon.

While these mismatches between the format of the media tools and the cultural expectations can be dealt with either by modifying the media as much as possible or by educating the audience, the dynamics are quite similar to

the translation of a text where only so much adjustment can be made to the original before the meaning is irreparably altered or destroyed. In addition, the farther away from the cultural norms of the audience, the more foreign a particular media piece will seem. If the purpose of using media in the local language is to bolster local identity and to create pride in the culture, media tools which are excessively foreign in their look and feel are likely to be counterproductive.

The Challenge of a Sustainable Media

Another challenge to the development of a local language media is the challenge of sustainability. The ideal, particularly if language and culture revitalization is in view, is to develop a media-production infrastructure that will be ongoing and self-sustaining. This involves, then, not only the identification of appropriate media tools, at whatever level of technical sophistication, but also the identification of media producers from within the ethnolinguistic group who will be able to continue to produce new and fresh media products. Without that sustainability, local language media is likely to become merely a collection of novelties, a few media oddities which use the local language and which serve as reminders of a long-ago project where products were created, most likely with the assistance of, and in dependence on, outsiders.

With this concern in mind, the choice of media types in a local language may be constrained by the current availability of trained local people. Further, if some media already exists, the expansion of media beyond its current levels of usage in the local setting may be constrained by the accessibility and availability of training for the development of the needed specialists in scripting, acting, voicing, production, etc. Ideally that training, which at first may only be available from outsiders, should become locally owned and available on site and in the local language.

In addition to the training and preparation of individuals in the various skills required, organizational and institutional infrastructures must be developed which will provide the specialists with employment and which will take on the development of media on an ongoing basis. One of these infrastructures might be the local training courses where those who have acquired the needed skills would pass them on to others within the language group.

In some communities, which are at the top-end of media sophistication, there may be a large enough market for local language media materials that such institutions may be able to operate as for-profit businesses deriving their development and operational funding from sales of products. More often, however, in endangered language situations, the community is smaller, less economically viable, and media production may be sustained only by limiting production to the less technically sophisticated genres or through subsidies from outsiders for more ambitious production efforts.

There can be a wide-range of configurations for the development of this media infrastructure from individual entrepreneurs, to community-based committees or cooperatives, to large-scale outside corporations vying for a niche market. No matter the configuration, however, the media skills required for the types of media being produced, must be transferred through apprenticeships, more formal in-community training programs, or through professional training acquired off-site.

The tendency exists here as well for the cost of media sophistication to be exacted in loss of authenticity and local-culture appropriateness. In some ways, the local community is likely to feel the pressure to give up their local cultural and linguistic identity in order to gain media sophistication. The challenge will be for them to produce culturally and linguistically authentic, locally-owned media products on an ongoing basis at a level of sophistication that they can feel proud of. Productions which are recognized as "second-rate" because they are competing in the dominant language and culture's market, may not support language and culture maintenance but instead emphasize the desirability of language and culture shift.

The Challenge of a Financially Viable Media

Closely related to the challenge of sustainability is the challenge of financial viability. As mentioned above, the more technologically sophisticated media approaches are expensive and require both equipment and levels of expertise that are not readily available in most endangered language communities. Both the equipment and the expertise can be bought but the price is high and usually the market for sales of the resulting product is intentionally limited to speakers of the local language. Often this market is small not so much because there are fewer people in the intended audience but rather because of economic inequalities as well as negative or apathetic attitudes towards the local language and its use.

Faced with this reality, the options are to produce less expensive types of media or to find a way to subsidize the production costs. Choosing the former may lead to a kind of "folklorization" of the media where as with a dying language, its roles and functions are limited to informal, non-public, "quaint" domains of use. That in itself may serve to further convince speakers of an endangered language that there is no future in their language and culture and that modernity, with all of its rewards and benefits can be theirs only through shift to a language with a wider range of uses.

Such a situation is not entirely without hope, however. Often in endangered language situations, attitudes towards the local language are negative or apathetic at best. Sometimes, in such situations hearing the language used on the radio, or on cassette tape, provides evidence that the language is worthy of use and adds to its prestige.

Colleagues in Guatemala who used recorded texts as part of a matched-guise test found that the mere fact that a Low language guise had been recorded enhanced its prestige significantly. (Langan, 1986; McArthur and McArthur, 1987)

On the other hand, opting for subsidy of the media effort, particularly if the subsidy comes from outsiders, may

result in dependence, loss of local control, and inevitably to the inability to sustain media development for the long term.

In contrast, however, if the subsidization can be achieved from within the community itself, through cooperative efforts, local funding campaigns and other culturally appropriate mechanisms, there is a much greater likelihood that media development will be culturally appropriate, sustainable and financially viable.

In practice, most local media efforts that I am aware of combine both external subsidy and local initiatives. The most effectiveof these are those where outside subsidies are used to develop and train local personnel and to provide initial equipment and physical infrastructure, while local initiatives work to provide operating and maintenance costs. The pitfalls of dependence are avoided by ensuring that day-to-day operations and production are in the hands of the local owners and that outside funding comes with as few strings attached as possible. Inevitably, the scarcity of resources also serves practically to put a cap on the level of technical sophistication that any particular group can achieve as well.

The Challenge of a Technologically Appropriate Media

The rapid expansion and development of new media technologies presents a challenge for even the most sophisticated and experienced producers. The moment in which a particular technology is adopted is almost sure to be the moment in which a newer, more effective and efficient, more cost-effective, and, of course, incompatible, newer technology is introduced. Obsolescence is a fact of life in media production. Slides begat filmstrips, begat motion pictures, begat "talkies" begat video, begat streaming video, and so on. Each new technology that comes along requires new equipment both for production and for distribution, so the challenge of identifying appropriate technology is inextricably tied to financial considerations.

The fact that equipment also requires maintenance and support connects the appropriate technology decisions to issues of sustainability as well.

Technology choice, however, is not only an issue for media producers. The audience must also be considered. In addition, the level of visual literacy and media sophistication and contact also impinges on the choice of appropriate media technologies for a particular ethnolinguistic group. Remote groups with minimal contact with outside media may have considerable difficulty "reading" television or video formats or even understanding printed visual imagery if it does not follow their known norms for artistic representation.

Again, a general principle is that the more sophisticated and high tech the media format that is selected, the greater will be the requirements in the area of finances, sustainability and cross-cultural adaptation.

While numerous ways can be devised to work around and improvise for the requirements of highly technological approaches, in order to make them work under less than ideal conditions, it is generally best for the long term if the right technology can be identified for each situation.

As with written literature, it is also best to move from the known to the unknown. Thus, in situations where there is less exposure to audio-visual media, it would work best to begin with the kinds of media that are already known and understood. Drama, dance, storytelling, chants and music can all be used very effectively and come with cultural authenticity "built-in" when used as "Stage 1" media. Even when the content may be new to the audience (Stage 2 or 3), the medium will be well-known and will not interfere with the communication process. In addition, these traditional forms support local involvement, are usually within the financial means of the local people, and are more sustainable because the skills needed to produce them already exist or can be learned.

However, traditional media are not without their limitations. Because they are often oral, they are not permanent as are recordings or print materials, and must be re-enacted at every performance. Where members of the group are widely scattered this limits accessibility (or increases the cost of accessibility) to the production. In some, particularly endangered, situations, there may not be enough participants with the requisite skills to mount a production or to perform. In some cases those who have the skills may be too old to perform or may be unable to teach younger people who lack the necessary proficiency in the language. In addition, because of the close ties certain oral genres have with traditional ceremonies and rituals, they may not be readily adaptable for new uses or for the communication of other messages. Attempts to make such adaptations may fall flat.

Other technologies are similar in that they have advantages and disadvantages. Figure 2 displays various print and non-print visual media options and describes the strengths, limitations, and costs of each.

It is important to investigate attitudes towards various media formats and technologies. Where there has been no previous exposure, a new technology is almost always likely to be considered foreign. The import of that for language and culture maintenance must be assessed. In addition, the functions deemed appropriate for various media technologies to which people have been exposed must also be assessed. A particular media format or technology may be strongly associated with a particular kind of information or informative function, such as entertainment, advertising, education, religion, etc. Attempts to use a format already strongly associated with one function for another function will require considerably more effort. Another area of research is how media are used and appreciated by various segments of the population, e.g. women, children, educated, etc.

In a study my colleagues and I conducted in Guatemala concerning the use of K'iche' on the radio, we found, for example, that the bulk of K'iche' radio broadcasting was for either religious purposes or for advertising. (Lewis et al., 1989). K'iche' was used very little for education nor for information. Although the situation has changed somewhat since our study was carried out, the use of

K'iche' on the radio for purposes of building identity and supporting language maintenance was also almost non-existent.

Such research can be helpful in identifying what kinds of technologies are best used for delivering what kinds of content and to what audiences.

The Challenges of a Sociolinguistically Appropriate Media

A final challenge to be considered in the development of a local language media is the challenge of sociolinguistic appropriateness of the media products. In communities where the language and culture is endangered or undergoing language shift, the "elephant in the room" which is often studiously ignored is the fact of the functional distribution of the languages which are used in that setting.

The presence and nature of the diglossic relationship between the endangered language and the encroaching language is an important factor to be considered. Generally, in such situations, the appropriate domains of use for the endangered language are becoming fewer in number and usually are restricted to informal, intimate, non-public configurations of topic, speaker, and location.

This fact provides a reasonable and acceptable space for the use of the local language in traditional oral genres such as drama or storytelling for the presentation of Stage 1 content. It also makes it appropriate to use more high tech formats such as radio or audio cassette as a means of distribution of the oral materials which may simultaneously enhance the prestige of the language.

As the content of the material presented moves beyond Stage 1, however, and increasingly involves the use of the local language for the presentation of Stage 3 and Stage 4 material, using technologies that are also viewed as foreign, there is greater and greater likelihood that the material will begin to move outside of the accepted sociolinguistic norms of language use and thereby begin to sound strange, awkward, or even silly.

Consider for example a video dubbing which has a well-known respected figure, say the President of the country, speaking the local language. Some in the audience may be delighted at this turn of events, others may be confused, while others may be embarrassed and offended.

One local language group in the Philippines were astounded when they watched a video dubbed in their language because their (accurate) belief that they were the only speakers of their language was challenged quite directly. How could these white people, wearing such strange clothing and behaving in such strange ways, also be members of their group?

While these sorts of problems can be dealt with by careful explanation of how the video was made and how the soundtrack has been added, there are more subtle issues to be dealt with in the scripting and production of such products.

How should dialect differences (both geographic and social) be dealt with in the dubbing process? Shouldn't beggars talk like beggars and wealthy people talk like wealthy people? Not to do so may result in a good bit of unintended humor in the production as the beggar speaks in a form of the language that is inappropriate for his station and social class.

Similarly, how should the bilingual nature of the local community be addressed in such productions? While the purpose of the local language media may be to bolster the use of the local language and, perhaps in cases of severe endangerment, even to provide extensive samples of the language itself for new learners, it may seem as ludicrous as in the previous examples, if all of the characters are presented as monolingual in the local language, particularly when their race, social class, or other distinctives would mark them as speakers of a language other than the local variety.

There are, of course, innovative ways to deal with these issues. The important point is that they are recognized and dealt with by those who are creating or translating scripts for either audio or audio-visual media productions.

Conclusion

In this paper I have identified five areas of concern for those who are involved in the development of local language media products. I have taken the concepts of the stages of literacy materials development and expanded those to include the kinds of content and technologies used in media products and I have demonstrated how the five areas of concern are interconnected and dependent on each other. The choice of an appropriate "media mix" for any local community must be based on careful research into their exposure to media, their language use patterns and language attitudes, and on the kinds of infrastructures which are already in place or can be developed to provide economic and human resource support for a sustainable media effort. While the challenges are considerable, the development of an appropriate approach to local language media can be of great benefit to the local community and can work to support and enhance language maintenance in those communities.

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TYPE	STRENGTHS	LIMITATIONS	COSTS
Audio Cassettes	readily available portable tailor-made programs convenient replay controlled by listener supplements other media versatile teaching medium tapes are recyclable adapt to private listening	requires a player oral only need maintenance fixed rate of information flow	relatively inexpensive
Filmstrips	easy to handle portable sequential & sequence retained good for groups or individuals	permanent sequence requires equipment need oral explanation	relatively inexpensive
Posters, Flipcharts, Flashcards	no equipment needed suited to local art forms simple form for learning	can be bulky lower interest than high tech limited group viewing less durable	inexpensive
Radio	popular flexible broad or narrow coverage depending on transmitter power requires only listening varied programming possible stimulates individual visualization	may be government controlled (prohibiting local language use) requires a receiver oral only limited prime time limited repetition most effective if programming is done in a series no audience control	varies with situation
Slides, Still Photographs	visual and lifelike easily produced flexible sequence compact suitable for groups or individuals	requires equipment can get out of sequence need oral explanation less durable (easily scratched, destroyed)	relatively inexpensive
Film, Video, Television	high interest growing availability motion gives greater sense of reality suited to large audiences videotapes can be recycled	requires equipment and trained personnel permanent sequence may be perceived as only entertainment aimed at broader audiences not so practical for handling complex issues	generally more costly
Computer-based Media	high interest good for individuals or groups growing availability varied programming possible may be adapted to local art forms, fonts, etc. both visual and oral sequence is adaptable to needs of user repeatable may incorporate both stills and motion	requires equipment and trained personnel equipment and media (disks, CD's) require maintenance and support	generally more costly

Figure 2: Strengths, Limitations and Relative Costs of Media Types
(adapted from Malmstrom and Powell, 2001)

Power of the Media for the Good of 'Small' Languages: an Indian Experience of Enriching Diversity

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Abstract

David Crystal a popular writer and broadcaster on language issues, forecasts (2000):

By some counts, only 600 of the 6,000 or so languages in the world are 'safe' from the threat of extinction. By some reckonings, the world will, by the end of the 21st century, be dominated by a small number of major languages.

The rapid endangerment and death of many minority languages across the world is a matter of widespread concern, not only among linguists and anthropologists but among all interested in the issues of cultural identity in an increasingly globalized culture. This phenomenon, like the large-scale destruction of the environment, is both peculiarly modern and increasingly global.

No doubt, economic and commercial factors of globalization tilt the balance in favour of those languages, which dominate the *physical* space, such as English on the electronic media, particularly in international forums and regional confederations (like the European Union), being perceived as the *killer* language (Fishman 1998, Khubchandani 1999). But at the same time, human interactions conducted through demographically and economically 'weaker' languages can assert their utility in less glamorous, but vital, domains known as the *communitarian* space (predominantly in oral interactions). Interactive technologies in the *cyber* space can also be utilized as a force for diversity.

Beyond the Physical Space

Symbolically man lives in different layers of space. In the context of verbal communication, a *base* for the community's solidarity, a sense of belongingness, can be identified with:

a) the *communitarian* space, manifested through the density and intensity of interactions among its members;
b) the *physical* space as monitored by State; delineated by language accreditation and privileges in the political set-up; or
c) the *cyber*-space, 'networking' tapped through the dispersed diasporas of native and non-native speakers.

With the advent of information technology giving a fill-up to 'knowledge' and 'culture' industries, we are now entering into a phase of communication where dispersed cultural groups sharing a common tradition explore the space through convenient modes of mobility and electronic networking.

Cyberspace is created on the global scene through information highways (websites, e-mail, personalized home pages, and other networking devices) which, in course of time, can supplement or replace traditional channels of communication linked with physical proximity (i.e., neighbourhood, school, village, metropolis, etc.). The impact of this interactive media is gradually seeping among many professional bodies and voluntary agencies which are diffused in character.

Cyberspace can be regarded as an "undefinable place where geography becomes irrelevant". Space becomes quite fluid encouraging interactions between the local speech community and the time-sharing diaspora across the globe. Escaping the issues of "both/either" in an open-minded, non-exclusive fashion, telecommunications lead to a new kind of diaspora, a 'virtual' community which lacks place and continuity in time. But there is a basic desire to connect, to interrelate through a value system, a sense of collective stake as well as shared adversity – a sort of communication ethos discussed letter.

In this background, one can cite the example of Sindhi diaspora in the South Asian subcontinent and the overseas (approximately 25 million speakers), characterizedby the dynamics of dispersal on an epochal scale in recent decades as an aftermath of the Partition in 1947; it poses various issues concerning the presentation and preservation of cultural heritage. By identifying and creating applications of multimedia technology and through its dynamic navigation, it can be within the reach of a diaspora to translate their vision into a reality, by thinking globally and acting locally, and creating an effective community bondage. (Khubchandani 1998a, 2001).

Information Society

With a rapid penetration of mass media and information technology in all walks of life, a new *linguistic order* is emerging on the global scene. It drastically affects the role

of languages whether perceived as 'big' or 'small', 'strong' or 'weak', 'developed' or 'developing' languages alike. By and large, new technologies can be instrumental in creating new avenues for the speakers of both 'majority' languages as well as of 'minority' languages of "living in a plural world".

One significant causality of this development has been *monolingualism* in specific regions: it is on the way out. Multi-channels and multilingual inputs in mass media on a massive scale lead us to consider afresh the conceptual basis of information society. Heterogeneous media threaten the autonomous functioning of different languages. Multi-channels provide individuals in a community a greater access to diversified language-choice and its content. The simultaneous beaming of programmes through satellite networks for cross-cultural audiences has added a whole new dimension to the life and experience of the masses.

The issues of language endangerment acquire a greater salience under the premise that language is a 'standard' entity, insulated within 'well-defined' enclosures, such as the languages enriched by literary traditions and administrative power; eighteen languages granted accreditation in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution is a case in point.

In this paradigm, language borrowings, 'open-ended' lexical transfers, and 'unstructured' blending patterns of code-switching/mixing, code-neutralization, and pidginization, when not legitimized by language custodians, are viewed as 'language degeneration': e.g., the lingua-francas Hindustani and Angrezi (grassroots English) on the South Asian scene. Pursuing this logic, the reduction in functions of many minority languages and their subordinate/complementary role in cross-cultural settings, is viewed by some linguists with great concern.

Information society, on the other hand, focuses attention to view language as an 'open-ended' ongoing process in everyday communications, a live force which remains in perpetual flux, in a state of becoming. This characteristic distinguishes it from the conventional notion of language as a 'ripened product', a crystallized being, as cultivated in school education. Social usage of such language on a massive scale is becoming so primary that it has led modern societies to a new awareness of communication (Khubchandani 1989).

The dynamics of 'open' systems in language gets more pronounced in mass media to meet the demands of everyday-life reality. Multi-disciplinary orientations to study such transient speech events bring into focus non-linear attributes of natural language. The phenomenon of language undergoing changes along with usage, just as reality changes, has, in a way, rescued it from restrictive parameters and techniques of logical formalization, a characteristic of open systems (Khubchandani 1996). Effects of a discourse, as in advertising, are grasped from the proportion of its constituents, a harmonious blending of parts, forming a balanced whole. The integrative thrust of the ancient grammarians have rightly laid emphasis on the axiom: "The whole is prior to its parts" (Khubchandani 1999).

Probing into the philosophical foundations of communication, we need to reflect over the conceptual basis of information society and the issues arising out of information deluge; relationship of thought to techniques to understand the routines and methods of data processing at human level based on natural somatic functions (i.e. sight, touch, hearing, etc.), and relate them to emerging computing and communication technology. In this context, a threat is perceived to the quality of variation and pluralism in human communication. The abstract conceptual models pronounced by the affluent society and their distortions and delusions become the official versions of the happenings around the globe, as experienced from the CNN coverage of the Gulf War in early nineties. How to assert the authority of 'personal' as opposed to 'public' or general experience?

Communication being dyadic in nature, it can create social behaviour from individual behaviour which creates togetherness, a community. Concerns of 'haves' and 'have nots' pose many questions relating to the issues of communication and community on the socio-political level. Accessibility of users i.e. the possessions of a means of communication and the content can lead to exploitation, a form of cultural imperialism of the affluent groups (also nations). How to counter the apparent domination trend of elite-accessibility at the mass level? The question that needs to be projected is how to generate necessary competence in the individual to withstand the pressure of high-power media; in another sense, how to be the real master of the new vistas opening up through the intensive use of technology in communication.

Living in a Plurilingual Milieu

Most of the regions in South Asia are marked by plurality of cultures and languages in one space (village, town, district, state, nation). India has been a laboratory of living with a plurilingual ethos since the ages. In this milieu an *organic complementation* of different languages has thrived through the processes of synergy and serendipity in interpretation, and by applying diverse strategies of code-switching / mixing, code neutralization, diglossic patterning, emergence of lingua francas, etc.

Communication patterns in contemporary India reveal that the trends of globalization through mass media and information technology have intensified this diversity (Khubchandani 2000). Television and radio broadcasting networks in India can be considered as one of the classic examples of being multilingual to the core. One generally anticipates the potential of multilingual audiences. Various strategies are adopted to cater to the demands of audiences and viewers in different languages:

a) Differenttime-slots are assigned to various languages for regional viewership.
b) Alternate switch-over between two pan-Indian languages, English and Hindi, or a regional language is provided to cater to across-language viewership, such as commentaries covering sports and public events like Republic Day, Independence Day rallies, and so on.
c) Many live episodes when conducted in more than one languages are broadcast/telecast, very often, without bilingual props, such as when covering proceedings of the Parliament. Very often, musical medleys are presented in a combination of mutually intelligible languages (such as Hindi, Urdu and Panjabi).
d) With increased facilities for simultaneous interpretation in recent years, there are now more occasions of providing flash summaries in another language (mostly in Hindi or English), in somewhat unstructured manner.

It is to the credit of the all India Radio, with a network of over three hundred transmission stations spread throughout the country, to adopt a liberal policy in giving representation to local languages. It caters to nearly forty languages for regular news broadcasts and developmental-educational programmes; many more 'vernaculars' are represented in folkloristic events, particularly when targeting development-oriented programmes to rural audiences. As an illustration, the Kohima Radio Station in Nagaland broadcasts cultural programmes in almost all Naga languages (numbering 19) on a weekly schedule, plus news bulletins in the lingua franca Nagamese and pan-Indian languages Hindi and English (Sreedhar 1988, Khubchandani 1992).

Similarly, the Indian Television network is also geared to the demands of multilingual viewers: **DOORDARSHAN 1** (known as **DD1**) is primarily targeted at all-India viewers on the National network covering programmes in pan-Indian languages, Hindi and English, and the Regional network covering languages of respective regions. Apart from the daily viewing of programmes in three or four languages, the National network organizes weekly bulletins in Sanskrit and Urdu, and shows regional cinema in different Indian languages, with or without sub-titles or summary in Hindi, English or the respective regional language. The **DOORDARSHAN 2** and **DOORDARSHAN METRO**, targeted to metropolitan viewers, focus on local (regional and minority) languages.
Content-wise the National Network on **DD1**, extended as a 24-hour service from August 1999, assigns specific time-slots for:

1. Regular viewing of news bulletins and news reviews intermittently in Hindi and English.
2. Social awareness programmes: discussion forums, interviews, entertainment and talk-shows (like *Subah Savere*).
3. Literary plays, and entertaining serials (mostly in Hindi-Urdu, and less frequently in English).
4. Development serials on agriculture, industry, trade and environment, and campaigns for literacy, health, family planning, social welfare, etc.
5. Youth and sports events, and programmes of special interest to women and children.
6. Educational programmes, called **GYANDARSHAN**, (The Window of Knowledge),relayed by the CEC (Consortium for Educational Communication) of the University Grants Commission, produced through educational Media Research Centres (EMRC) in different universities, and distance education courses designed by the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), and supplementary programmes for schools such as the 'Country-Wide Classroom' series.
7. Special coverage of national events, cultural and religious festivals, public addresses to the nation by the President, the Prime Minister and other dignitaries on the National network, (and by Governors and Chief Ministers of states on respective Regional networks).
8. Parliament proceedings (particularly the 'Question-Hour'), when in session: These programmes telecast 'live', generally alternate between English and Hindi, covering a wide range of linguistic variations from near-native 'highbrow' English to grassroots varieties thickly flavoured with Indianisms, from Sanskritized high Hindi to lingua franca Hindustani and Anglicized Hindi.
9. Announcements such as seeking applications for public examinations (through Union Public Service Commission) and competitions, corporate appointments, and for grants; drives for fund-raising to meet national calamities (like earthquakes, the Kargil War), notices for vaccination, expeditions to Mansarovar, Amarnath, and so on.

News broadcasting on the All India Radio is covered in over sixty languages. Television programmes are networked on over twenty-five regional channels (and the number is on the increase), where arrangements are made for the simultaneous beaming of select programmes in prominent regional languages, through dubbing, flash translations, transliteration, etc. Recently a South Asian Regional Conference EMMIT (Extending Multichannel and Multilingual Information Technology) was held in Pune by the C-DAC (Centre for the Development of Advanced Computing) for addressing the issues of language diversity in the region (Khubchandani 1998b).

A Plurilingual Ethos

Relationship of language and culture is interwoven in a unique manner in different traditions. In a plurilingual milieu, at the surface one enumerates many different languages and different scripts. Within one language

tradition, one may also notice many differences in everyday speech such as, in accent, inflection, derivation, lexicon, etc. But Indian masses through sustained interaction and common legacies have, by and large, developed a common way of sharing experience, of thinking. Speakers belonging to different language groups for instance, the way they argue, the way they persuade one another and exchange courtesies, and the way people express their preferences or apathy, are surprisingly common, as pointed out earlier; I call this characteristic in speech, the *communication ethos,* i.e. values through which one communicates -- a sort of general orientation to which speech is regulated (Khubchandani 1983).

Such underlying ethos points to the direction in which a culture is oriented, it aims at, prizes and endorses, and more or less achieves. It provides a strong supportive base in heterogeneous communications. People do not feel serious constraints when communicating through different, but related, language-codes. Plural societies comprise many such situations; such as in market places, banks and other working environs. Proceedings of the Indian Parliament (similar to informal parleys in many Scandinavian forums, and lately in the European Union as well) provide many insights into the management and the observance of decorum of plurilingual communications. It is not necessary for them to shift every time from one language to another, as they endorse and cherish the underlying communication ethos in the midst of diversity.

The Indian experience tells us that a genuine understanding of plural societies will largely be guided by viewing language as a 'synergetic' network inspiring *trust* in cross-cultural settings, along with the complementarity of empowering the 'particular' (Khubchandani 1993). On the contemporary scene the media plays a pivotal role as a *live force for diversity.*

The Indian concept of *kshetra* 'field, region' views the issues of heritage and rights of different speech communities in a *pluralistic* framework. It covers a wide spectrum of linguistic an cultural *variation* in everyday performance, and helps to foster the feeling of *oneness* among diverse people in the region (Saraswati 1988, Khubchandani 1999). It is markedly different from the Western concept of *region*, defined as 'a cohesive and homogenous area' created by the arbitrary selection of features like language, tradition, religion, etc. (Gordon 1981). A 'civilization' state like India cherishes the bonds of plural cultural heritage and a common ethos, sharing a deeper sense of collective reality in their verbal repertoire across languages. As viewed by Gandhi-ji, "There is fundamental unity running through all diversity."

A plural society such as India abounds in cases where grassroots plurilingualism among rural folks (mostly illiterate) on the one hand, and the expanding phenomena of code-switching and neutralized lingua francas in metropolitan areas on the other (such as Hindustani, Angrezi), offer a rich field to penetrate into the processes of acquiring speech from varied stimuli, and how a child learns to discriminate speech variation prevailing around him/her to meet with the demands of propriety and also to 'design' these variations for distinct communicative tasks.

In a plurilingual milieu language boundaries remain fuzzy and fluid, and a verbal repertoire gets blended across "well-knit" language systems; speakers in such a situation are hardly aware of operating across language boundaries. This milieu is characterized by a continuum between oral tradition and literate culture which is going through a phenomenal change resulting from the pursuits of modernization. Near-dialectalization of Braj and Awadhi during past one hundred years in favour of Khariboli as the main standard for the entire Hindi community in the Indian subcontinent is a case in point.

Universal Linguistic Rights

Universal Human Rights Movement in the contemporary World Order is gathering momentum with an agenda to assure dignity to every human being irrespective of her/his caste, creed, culture, nationality and language. This movement articulates many issues concerning the identity, freedom of expression, upholding copyright and privacy in communications, and protecting the heritage of individual groups and nations.

Many state agencies, pressure groups, voluntary organizations and international forums such as the United Nations, UNESCO and others have been actively engaged in the ideological and legal debates as 'perceived' in the context of the individual *per se* and of the community. As a student of language and communication, I have taken particular interest in pursuing the aspirations of different linguistic groups in plural polities and have been exploring the phenomena of language rights with a view to striving for a *just* and *fair* order of communication in the strife-torn world (Khubchandani 1981).

Some of the contours of human communication were first expounded in the framework of *social dyad* (moving away from the concerns of individual rights) by a UNESCO Work Group "Right To Communicate" at the University of Hawaii, Honolulu during the seventies when the UNESCO Commission headed by the Nobel Laureate Sean MacBride prepared a report on the New World Information Order titled *Many voices one world (*1980). I have been further pursuing the enquiry as a member of the Barcelona Group working since 1990 on the Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights with support from UNESCO; it has led me to further investigate into the nature of the *communication ethos* as prevailing amidst plurilingual and pluricultural societies in the Oriental world.

The UNESCO Report (MacBride 1980), discussing the challenges and opportunities of the new modes of communication, very eloquently sums up:

> Communication can be an instrument of power, a revolutionary weapon, a commercial product or a means of education; it can serve the ends of either liberation or of oppression, of either the growth of individual personality or drilling human beings into uniformity. The imaginative use of sound and image in the audio-visual media can, on the one hand, be an exhilarating experience in elevating the mind, and on the other, it can be devastatingly effective in enslaving it.

"The power of the word, particularly the word spoken over and over again, can be devastating. It may be harmless harangue... or it may be a calculated bit of political indoctrination with a veneer of objectivity" (Menon 1976).

Mass media's most captivating, and very often vulgarizing, impact is felt in the forms of propaganda for socio-political control and of advertising for commercial profiteering. The high-power media could inundate man with points of view, which may well turn out to be the negation of progress, freedom and human dignity. The phenomenon of 'hypnotic' control through mass media could expose helpless masses to political and economic pressures of every kind. Such processes of manipulation and acculturation in the developing world have been dubbed by many agencies as indoctrination and cultural invasion – a sort of 'communication imperialism' through imported technology and colonial English.

Conclusions

In the contemporary ambience, it will be essential to develop infrastructures and frameworks for a dialogue among the cross-sections of the society to evolve a code of conduct for ensuring protection to individuals/societies/ nations from the manipulative aberrations of 'man-machine' communication, on the lines similar to the ethics of enduring fresh air and pure water as bare necessities for a minimum *quality of life* on the globe.

Human communications are built on two pillars, namely *power* and *trust*. In a paradigm of *fair* communication rising above petty interests and narrow loyalties in a transcendental sense, the prestige and dignity (and not powerlessness) should go with the language networks encouraging *complementation*, and not with those aspiring to promote exploitative and *hegemonistic* networks of communication on the local, national, regional and global scenes. Formulating a coherent policy of the rights of lesser used languages, knitting together complex pluralities, can contribute to the *quality* of communication in a changing society for an integral cultural development of humankind.

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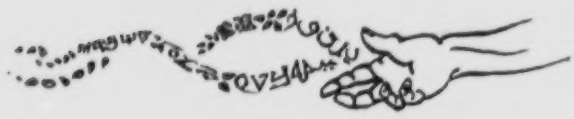

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How the State Caters for Language Minorities

Language protection and cultural policy in France

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Abstract

France has generally been highly criticized for its centralizing focus and alleged disregard for regional languages and for linguistic variation within the 'standard' language. Often this criticism has been leveled by reputation alone, without regard for factual reassessment. A comprehensive look at the full range of activities of the French government with respect to minority languages and linguistic variation within the *hexagone* presents some positive signs. This is not to say that France is a paradise for linguistic rights.

We will focus on the efforts to develop regional and minority language representation in mass media, and in the newest medium, the internet. This must be seen within the framework of French cultural policy, which has been dominated in international relations by the insistence on the 'exception culturelle'. In domestic politics and policies, the arguments supporting the promotion of French in international affairs have been used to promote regional languages and linguistic variation in France, the most recent example being the Law of August 1, 2000, requiring radio and television to "highlight our cultural and linguistic heritage, in all its regional and local variety". Execution does not always follow the political pronouncements, of course, and the maintenance of minority languages remains problematic.

Introduction

France has long been the poster child of hypercentralisation and cultural uniformity. Those who know anything about the history of French language policy usually only know three dates:

> 1539, the Ordonnance of Villers-Cotterêts requiring all legal activity in the kingdom be carried out in "langage maternel françois";
> 1794, the report by the Abbé Grégoire recommending that all possible steps be taken to wipe out linguistic variation in the Republic;
> 1994, the "Loi Toubon" seeking to ban anglicisms from French usage.

Nuances are rarely introduced into this simplistic approach, even though each of these three events are open to other interpretations. The meaning of the key phrase of the Ordonnance, "langage maternel françois", was controversial from the beginning: does it mean "langage maternel", thus admitting use of local languages, with "françois" only indicating geographic provenance? Or does it mean "langage françois", which is or should be "maternel"? The report by Grégoire during the period of the French Revolution was meant to be more inclusive to people previously barred from input to their own governance, and reflected frustration at the failure of a project to translate official documents into the many languages of France. The Loi Toubon applies only to government reports, and to a very limited vocabulary of mostly technical terms; its supporters claim that it is only meant to ensure the ability of French people to work and to understand important documents in their own language. Of course other interpretations are possible.

Whatever the realities of the situation, in the Anglo-Saxon world, hardly a model of linguistic tolerance itself, France is the model of intolerance. In part this comes as a result of France's unwillingness to become Anglo-Saxon, and in part from France's inconsistent statements and actions regarding linguistic diversity within its own borders. It is important to understand both the international and the national political contexts for language policy, as both affect policies regarding the maintenance of endangered languages.

The International Context

France has consistently contested Anglo-American linguistic and cultural domination, all the while imposing its own linguistic and cultural domination on its current and former colonies. The dispute between France and primarily American media conglomerates has been over the so-called "exception culturelle", the right of countries to limit free trade in the domain of cultural affairs, and specifically the amount of programming in languages other than the national language. Complaints about this policy come from two sides: from the Hollywood moguls, this is a violation of free trade, as France subsidizes the movie industry and controls to a certain extent, although less now than in the past, radio and television programming; from the speakers of minority languages within French territory, this is a violation of freedom of speech, insofar as it restricts access to information distributed in their languages.

The control of international distribution of cultural and informational is important to minority languages in France, for many of these linguistic communities cross national borders: Basque, Catalan, Italian, German, and Flemish, for example. The first restrictions on such transnational distribution of broadcast programming came during the years leading up to the

Second World War, primarily an effortby the League of Nations to restrict Nazi propaganda. Article One of the International Convention Concerning the Use of Broadcasting in the Cause of Peace (League of Nations 186 L.T.N.S 301, 1936) begins:

> The parties mutually undertake to prohibit and, if occasion arises, to stop without delay the broadcasting within their respective territories of any transmission which to the detriment of good international understanding is of such a character as to incite the population of any territory to acts incompatible with the internal order or the security of a territory of a High Contracting Party.

A primary concern in France was German transmissions to the German-speaking populations of Alsace and Lorraine.

After World War II the issue has focused on trade. The first GATT treaty (1947) included an exception for movies (referred to as "cinematograph films"), allowing countries to set screen quotas (Article 4), for the protection of domestic production of cultural materials (Article 19) and the protection of "national treasures of artistic, historic or archaeological value" (Article 20).

As media technologies changes, so did the international restrictions. The development of television, and then of satellite broadcasting, cable distribution, and now internet distribution have all led to further trade disputes. In the 1970s the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space of the United Nations considered the issue of "spillover", when content crosses national boundaries, being received in countries other than the one producing the broadcast. France called for the restriction of 6 types of programming:

1. programs that interfere with the internal affairsof foreign states
2. propaganda prejudicial to international or internal peace
3. attacks on the dignity or the rights of the individual
4. material offensive to the audience's moral, religious, philosophical or political sensibilities
5. material harmful to children (especially violence)
6. material disrespectful of the cultures within the area of transmission or tending to destroy civilizations, cultures, religions or traditions.

In 1989 the "Television without frontiers" directive of the European Union required member states to reserve a majority of their transmission time for European works, a term that required some definition. That same year the US-Canadian Free Trade Agreement, Article 2012, allowed an exception concerning cultural industries, defined as the production, distribution, sale or exhibition of books, magazines, newspapers, films, music videos, audio recordings, music, or radio and television programming. This then served as the model for the GATT and WTO negotiations of the 1990s, with the United States and France on opposite sides.

Generally speaking France has won the trade treaty battles, but lost the trade practice war. France fought hard for the cultural exception, often justifying this position in terms of the protection of linguistic and cultural rights. The wording of subsequent agreements has permitted the cultural exception, but at the same time France, and most countries around the world, have been swamped with American cultural productions. American movies dominate screen time in France, both in the cinema and on television. The new technologies have only exacerbated the problem, with the English language dominating the cultural production on the World Wide Web.

Technology as the problem is an attitude exemplified by Benjamin Barber's *Jihad vs. McWorld* polemics. Barber's thesis is that a media-driven culture destroys civil society, by the very nature of the medium, since it destroys the "culture of the word". Democracy is only possible if the free market offersreal choice, and real choice can only be a reality if information about all the choices is available. For Barber, though, France's cultural exception does not address this issue. By his interpretation, France is driven by a "protectionist panic", as exemplified by the reaction to the awarding of the *palme d'or* at Cannes to the American movie "Barton Fink". Barber sees France as more worried about cultural protection than about participatory democracy, and therefore he rejects France's claims to a cultural exception in international trade.

Barber's vision of France is seen through the prism of American journalism, which, influenced by the monolingualism of the reporters and the free market prejudices of the culture, is hardly an unbiased view. It is a perspective shaped by almost complete ignorance of the internal politics of language in France, and it is to this we shall now turn our attention.

France and minority languages since World War II

Teaching of minority languages was generally discouraged if not forbidden in the schools of the French Third Republic (1870-1940), but teaching French through minority languages was occasionally, though not generally, permitted (see Chanet 1996). Nonetheless, regional movements remained active in the period between the two wars. In 1936 a first attempt was made to approve of the teaching of Breton, and during the Vichy régime optional courses in Basque, Breton, Flemish and "Occitan".[1] Several regionalist groups were compromised by collaboration with the Nazi occupation, but others less tainted took their place, and in 1951 the "Loi Deixonne" permitted optional instruction in Basque, Breton, Catalan and Occitan. Corsican, Alsatian, and Flemish have since been added to the list, as well as Gallo, a northern Gallo-Romance speech bordering the Breton-speaking region. In addition to adding more

[1] As we shall point out below, the term "Occitan" is controversial, as most would recognize a division of the linguistic territory into at least three regions (Provençal, Languedocien, Gascon), with many further divisions possible. The territory was never politically unified before the imposition of Northern French control, nor linguistically unified.

languages, the ministry of education has also expanded the offering, gradually adding the possibility of passing the *brevet*, the *baccalauréat*, and the *CAPES* in a regional language. Bilingual schooling is becoming more common, though hardly commonplace. 746,000 French francs have been given as a funding to 16 studies, financed by the ministry of education and the ministry of culture for research on regional languages.

For the school year: 1998-1999, in public schools, students learning a regional language totalled 176,148, and in the private schools, 12,822. The total number of teachers in the public schools is 6943 and in the private schools, 99. For high schools, in the academic year 1996-1997, there were 54,686 students taking a regional language (Statistics provided by the Ministry of Education, Direction de l'enseignement scolaire. The high school data is certainly incomplete)

In junior high –*collège*—an optional teaching of the regional language is offered from the 6th grade until the 9th grade. Starting from the 8th grade, students can take a regional language as one choice in the mandatory subject "langues vivantes". In high school, students can choose regional languages as a choice of second and third "langues vivantes". While sitting for the Baccalauréat, candidates can choose among thirteen languages, namely: Basque, Breton, Catalan, Corsican, Gallo, Occitan, langues régionales de l'Alsace, langues régionales des pays mosellans, Tahitien, et 4 Melanesian languages.

Other schools offer "total immersion". These are private schools "associatif sous contrat avec l'Etat". The teaching is done is the regional languages during pre-school years and then French is introduced progressively. Some of the schools are : Diwan (Breton), Seaska (Basque), Calandretas (Occitan), Bressolas (Catalan), and ABCM (Alsatian)

In May of 2001 the Assemblée nationale passed a series of measures relating to special status for the island of Corsica. Article 7 of this law reads "the Corsican language is a subject taught as part of the normal schoolday in kindergarten and elementary schools". This particular article was extremely controversial, as opponents claimed that it made the teaching of a specific language other than French obligatory, and because it meant that only fluent Corsican speakers could be hired as preschool and elementary teachers, the "ethnicisation of employment" according to Georges Sarre. Does this make the teaching of Corsican obligatory in the schools? Yes, according to the opponents of this bill (the political parties RPR and MDC as a whole, and UDF and DL in part); No, according to its proponents (PS and Green Party). The Communist Party abstained. Such teaching of the local language is already performed in French Polynesia.

The program "Langues et Cultures d'Origine" is another educational program promoted by the French government, this one aimed at recent immigrants. Established in 1973, it provides instruction in Portuguese, Italian, Arabic (Algerian, Moroccan and Tunisian), Turkish, and Spanish, usually in after-school programs provided through arrangements with the home governments. The vast majority of these students are at the elementary school level, and more than half are studying Arabic. As the teaching is provided by the countries of origin through bilateral agreements, immigrant groups that are non-territorial, such as the Romany, or from countries that have not signed such an agreement, are left out.

It should be remembered that such instruction is optional, although this status in Corsica is controversial, and that only French can be used in official business. This was confirmed by the addition of a constitutional amendment declaring that "the language of the Republic is French" (Article 2). The *Conseil constitutionnel* reviewed and reinforced this provision in a 1996 decision, which required all people in official functions to perform their duties in French, and all people who came before administrative or other public services to use French.

The unequivocal nature of this declaration of the place of French in public life led proponents of minority languages and cultures to seek other affirmations of their existence, particularly in the domain of medias and culture. In addition to efforts by the Ministry of Education to strengthen opportunities for education in minority languages, the Ministry of Culture has sought to promote minority languages through fairs, demonstrations of regional crafts and traditions, musical and other cultural events. As France subsidizes cultural activity to an extent unparalleled in most parts of the world, the results are significant. One of the most recent initiatives is to create a "Librairie des langues de France", which provides public libraries with special funds to purchase works in or about regional languages, and also supports the costs of reissuing books of particular regional interest. 450,000 French francs are given to this project. A list, not yet finished by the Délégation général à la langue française contains over one hundred thirty titles and projects on or in minority languages that are funded by this project.

The délégation national à la langue française (DGLF) has created publicity documents for each of the 75 languages of France identified in the 1999 report by Bernard Cerquiglini. In addition, unsubsidized regional groups have also had a sizable presence.

One of the most promising avenues has been the requirement that:

> Companies (in the audiovisual sector) fulfill missions of general interest and for the public good. They offerto the general public, and all the segments of which it is constituted, a group of programs and services which are characterized by their diversity and pluralism, their insistence on quality and innovation, the respect for human rights and democratic principles.
>
> They offer diversified programming in both analogical and digital formats in the areas of news, culture, knowledge, entertainment and sports. They encourage democratic debate, exchanges between different segments of the population, as well as assimilation into the ranks of citizens. They promote the French language and highlight our cultural and linguistic heritage, in all its regional and local variety.
>
> They ensure the honesty, independence and pluralism of the news as well as the expression of a variety of thought and opinion.
>
> The state agencies concerned with mass communications have the further mission of

contributing to the expansion of the francophone world and the diffusion of French language and culture around the world. (Loi 2000-179 du 1er août 2000; our translation)

The reaction to this opportunity has been mixed, but at least some regions have taken advantage of these measures to offerlocal broadcasting in regional languages. Since the 1970s limited radio broadcasts, even by the official stations, have been made in regional languages. The first broadcasts in Corsican were heard in 1972, in Provençal in 1977. Today these have become more common, particularly since the creation of private radio stations in the 1980s. In the summer of 2000 TV Breizh began broadcasting in Breton.

Several TV stations broadcast programs in regional or minority languages in different regions of France. For instance: France 3 Alsace broadcasts the program "Sür un siess" each Saturday; France 3 Corse has "A famiglia Pastasciu", "Foli Salvatichi", and "Ghjente"; France 3 Méditerranée offers"Sa méditerranée Veici" in Provençal. Some newspapers in regional languages are: *Occitania* (in Occitan) and *Herria* (in Basque).

As for the radio, The Comités Techniques Rediophoniques, under the supervision of The Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel, has worked to improve the place of regional and minority languages. There are now a wide range of programs in different languages in the Metropolitan France. In areas with high immigration density such as Paris and Marseille, a number of programs are in Arabic and Portuguese, as well as other immigrant languages. For instance, the radio station Frequence Paris Plurielle offers bilingual programs (French and a target language); one hour per week of programs in Chinese, Spanish, Farsi...; two hours of programs in Kurdish, Turkish and Creole; four hours of programs in Arabic; two hours in Serbo-Croatian.

In places such as Rennes, Bordeaux and Toulouse, the programs are in languages that are still prominent in these areas. For instance: Radio Pays offers eleven hours of programs in Corsican; nine hours in Basque; seven hours in Occitan, Catalan, and Breton, four hours in Alsatian and Flemish. In Rennes, the Comité technique radiophonique has several stations in Breton : Radio Kreiz Breizh in Guincamp, Radio Armorique in Landivisiau, Radio Emeraude in Lesneven, Radio Alternantes in Nantes , Radio Bro Gwened in Pontivy. In addition Radio France has regional broadcasts in Alsace, Brittany, Corsica, Basque Country and Roussillon.

However, these efforts are limited in important ways. Because of the French Constitution, a minority language cannot be privileged because it serves only a minority. This would violate the principle of equality. For centuries using one language, French, has ensured this equality among all citizens. Therefore, for a regional press to receive funding from the government three criteria must be met:

1. It must consistently provide information and commentaries on current news, political or general, local, national or international, for the purpose of enlightened opinon on the part of the citizens;
2. The majority of the content must focus on the matters listed in (1).
3. It must present an interest which clearly goes beyond the preoccupations of a single category of reader. (Commission Paritaire des Publications et Agences de Presse 2001)

It is clear that media in the minority and regional languages would target a specific population and not the general French population. The number of speakers of these languages might be minimal, sometimes only a few hundred speakers. What the government provides with one hand, it seems to take away with the other.

The press in regional languages can sometimes bypass the three criteria above by getting a special agreement with the Commission paritaire. The support comes in the form of cheaper postage and a reduction in the TVA (value-added tax). Overall, the press in France received over 7 million French francs in 1999 from the government in order to "ensure the political, cultural and linguistic diversity of the press".

All of these efforts coincide with ever more stringent expectations on the part of international bodies (the United Nations, the European Union, etc.) concerning the maintenance of minority languages and cultures. The most far-reaching of these is the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. We shall devote the rest of our discussion to France's reaction to this initiative.

The European Charter : Introduction

On May 7th, 1999, France signed the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in Budapest, during the 50th Anniversary of the Council of Europe. The Charter was supposed to be in effectin France as soon as the French Parliament would ratify it. The charter was first drafted in 1992 in Strasbourg, after seventeen years of negotiations.

The main purpose and philosophy behind the charter is first to ensure the survival of the diverse cultures of Europe; second to ensure that the minority languages of Europe will not die or be threatened by the dominance of the national languages of Europe; and third, to make sure that historical languages of Europe would survive as was stipulated in the "Convention de sauvegarde des droits de l'homme et des libertés fondamentales du conseil de l'Europe". The European Council is trying to raise the stature of minority and regional languages and cultures as main contributors to the construction of a unified Europe. Within the framework of national sovereignty and the respect for territorial integrity, signatory countries are expected to support the principles of democracy and cultural diversity. The protection of territorial integrity precludes unification movements of groups that straddle national borders, as for instance the Basques and the Catalans in France and Spain.

The Charter made it clear that what is considered minority or regional languages are languages that are traditionally spoken in regions or territories by natives of this region/country. These natives must constitute a minority with regards to the main population. Hence, the Charter does not include dialectical variation of the main or official language(s) of a country nor the native

languages of immigrants. The main goal for the Charter is to promote the development of minority or regional languages by using them in public life, in social and economic contexts as well as in teaching and learning. So, different measures can be applied to different languages. To accept the charter, each country must sign a minimum of 35 of the proposals. France accepted 39.

The Prime Minister of France, Lionel Jospin, gave the mission first to Nicole Péry and later to Bernard Poignant to submit a report to him on the issue of minority and regional languages in France. The report gave a clear image of the situation of minority languages in France. Guy Carcassone, who provided the conclusion for this rapport, drafted a part on the "expertise juridique" to check whether signing the charter might cause any conflicts between the Charter articles and the French Constitution. This judicial report concluded that France could accept the Charter without modifying the Constitution.

Later, Bernard Cerquiglini was appointed by the Minister of Education and the minister of Culture to make a list of the languages that can be protected by the European Charter. The Rapport of Cerquiglini lists 75 languages that are eligible under the Charter. Interestingly, it lists Arabic and Berber, major immigrant languages in France, as languages of France.

In spite of the results of these studies, President Jacques Chirac would not agree to the ratification of the charter unless the "Conseil Constitutionnel" declared that the charter was compatible with the constitution. It is important to note that the two previous French governments before 1999, did not agree to sign the Charter using as a pretext Article 2 of the French Constitution, " la langue de la Republique est le Français". On May 20th, 1999, the Conseil Constitutionnel decided that the European Charter was contrary to the Constitution. Since then, President Jacques Chirac, not for the ratification, and Prime Minister Lionel Jospin, for the ratification, have politicized the issue.

Political parties and public figures in France are divided between the supporters of ratification (people advocating a more positive place for minority languages in France) and opponents of ratification. The supporters include the minister of Culture; the minister of Education; the Prime Minister; some mayors and elected officials from Occitanie (they created a group to lobby for the ratification of the charter); the Fédération des Régions et Peuples Solidaires (founded in 1995 in Rennes, it includes the regions of Brittany, Occitanie, Provence, Alsace, Catalogne, Corsica, Pays Basque, Franche-Comté and Savoie); the Commission des AffairesCulturelles du Conseil Régional de Bretagne; political parties such as the Greens and the UDF; and the Conseil Régional de l'Alsace in Strasbourg.

The opponents of ratification include le Mouvement National (formerly the Front National), now led by Bruno Mégret, the RPR (Chirac's party), and political figures such as Charles Pasqua, Philippe de Villiers, Gisèle Halimi, Edmond Charles-Roux, and Jean-Pierre Chevènement. They feel that it will cause a balkanization of France, and the horrific scenes from the Balkans have gained support for their position.

It is important to note that even French scholars who are working on the minority and regional languages, are frequently divided on policy issues. As mentioned earlier, the definition of "Occitan" has split those who are using linguistic grounds for the definition of a language (thus splitting the region into three (at least) from those who see a single Occitan as being more politically realistic. The definition of different dialects of Northern French has been problematic as well (Norman, Picard, Angevin, Bourguignon, Champenois, etc.).

Conclusions

In regions where minority languages are spoken, the popularity of the support for regionalism is high. Politicians are careful to position themselves as friends of minority languages. However, the centralizing forces within the French republic are still strong, still framed by the tenets of equality, and by the concept of monolingualism as a way of ensuring the unity of the country. The French government's policy toward minority languages has been shaped by its international policy as well as by its national policy. The international policy favors cultural protection, and alternatives to monolingualism and monoculturalism in the world arena. In domestic language policy this has been paralleled by openness to educational efforts in minority languages and by some openings in the broader media. Within the national framework, played out in the realm of the mass media, the political attractiveness of supporting regional languages has been counteracted by the egalitarian principles established at the time of the French Revolution. The result is professions of support for broader media coverage in minority languages, with rather limited financial backing, and significant constraints on content. Still, the characterizations of French policy in Anglo-Saxon media and scholarly work are not very accurate; and even if they were, the Anglo-Saxon world should hardly be casting the first stone.

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The Virtual Village Square
Media in minority languages in the process of media diversification and globalisation — an example from Southern Carinthia (Austria)

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Abstract

This paper is based on a study carried out among Slovenian speakers in the bilingual region of Southern Carinthia (Austria). The study describes the structural development of minority media and analyses the way in which these media fulfill the three basic communication functions: the propositional, the social and the personal. In media diversification new media have not replaced the old ones, but have pushed them into more specialized roles. In this process minority media have been marginalized in a "quantitative"sense: first when public service broadcasting has situated itself as an integration force for the nation state and found its way into all families' homes, and then with the commercialisation of the media on offer. Minority media have also been marginalized in a "qualitative" sense having undergone a specialisation in serving mainly the interactive function of communication and have become a substitute for the "village square communication" allowing speakers of the minority language to continue to feel at least virtually part of the community. In multilingual situations of external diglossia in which all speakers use the dominant language, but only a few use the dominated – as is the case for Southern Carinthia – media play a key role in language use at the individual and the collective levels. This study suggests that media development has accelerated a language shift from minority to majority language.

Separated public spheres: some historical and structural considerations

The rise of print media and the "hierarchization" of languages

The spread of printed media and the beginning of general literacy have modified social relationships and fostered sentiments of affiliation to abstract structures such as church, nation, state, cultural communities. To fortify the nation state, the school system, under direct state control, aimed at homogenising heterogenous populations by enforcing one "state" language as the teaching language, while in the print sector state influence was exercised by licensing and censorship. This led to a "hierarchization" between the differentlanguages within a state - not only according to the number of speakers but also corresponding to the political and social strength of the speech community (see Innis, 1997). This was also the case in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy where German became the dominant language in the educational and the media domain and the so called popular languages (Volkssprachen) were marginalized. To be present in the public sphere, the Slovenian-speaking community had to rely on its own publications. In a first phase it was mainly the Catholic Church that fostered publication activities in Slovenian. Being published in the minority language they were unable to reach the majority audience. As a result, separate media systems developed.

Mass media have often been considered an important means of political intervention. Publications in minority languages therefore, according to political and social interests, have been either fostered, ignored, or repressed at different moments in history. Repression took its most outrageous form under the totalitarian fascist regime, when first Slovenian language was forbidden and then the Slovenian population was deported to concentration camps.

After World War II the Declaration of Human Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights were drafted. The safeguard of individual rights laid down in these documents was understood as an anti thesis to the totalitarian state. Unable to reach a consensus on this sensitive issue, the international community refrained from explicitly defining minority rights in both documents; implicitly they are mentioned in the paragraphs of non-discrimination (see: Thornberry 1991). This spirit of "negative protection" only set limits to state interference, but did not guarantee equal access to media. Finally in the field of minority rights the prewar conception of the League of Nations prevailed, making minority issues an object of negotiation between the involved states. As the Austrian state and the Republic of Slovenia - until 1991 part of the Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia - belonged to two ideologically different blocks the negotiations between the two states also had a geopolitical connotation. As far as media are concerned the Austrian authorities did not allow the unhindered reception of media in Slovenian language from the neighbouring country. Although the Slovenian speaking community in Austria for years claimed the right to install re-transmitters for TV programmes from Slovenia, Austria remained firm her positions.

The ideal of homogenous national audiences

Until the spread of radio broadcasting, print media in minority languages were the only media for recipients within a minority community and fulfilled for them all

communication functions in the field of mass media. Further developments in the media have changed the systems of signs and forms of contact. In Europe the state influenced radio broadcasting right from the beginning. In Austria, longer than in other European countries, radio and TV was synonymous with public service broadcasting and assumed a double role: serving both as the political public sphere for the state and as a focus for national cultural identification. In its self-understanding public service broadcasting aimed at forging a link between dispersed and disparate listeners serving as an integrating force for national audiences, thus also producing the nation which it addressed (see Morley & Robins, 1996).

In public service radio, space for minority languages was granted when it was politically opportune or inevitable. It is important to distinguish here between programmes for minorities and programmes made by minorities expressing their views and concerns. The concept of producing programmes for the minority instead of giving the minority space to articulate its voice has been a constant concern throughout the years in public service broadcasting in Austria. As in most European countries, as in Austria, a minority language was not integrated in the daily programme in the sense of broadcasting regular news in majority and minority language throughout the day, or integrating Slovenian songs into request programmes, rather a niche was created, i.e. a separate broadcasting time for programmes in minority language.

In the late sixties public service broadcasting differentiated its offerings and henceforth proposed various channels with different styles: a "culture" channel with classical music and high quality information programmes, a "young" channel with modern music, and a more conservative regional channel. This meant a serious further marginalization of minority programmes as these programmes were confined to the latter of these three channels only. This media development coincided with the increasing mobility within society, with processes of rural exodus and migration from peripherical regions to centers. Both probably produced the effect that minority language got the connotation of "unmodern". Transistor technology made radio a medium which accompanies people individually throughout their day. TV occupied an increasingly important space in the "mise en scène" of family everyday life. As TV did not replace radio and radio did not replace the printed press, generally speaking, the time spent in presence of media increased. Majority language also penetrated to some extent into the family domain, i. e., the domain of primary language socialisation, which had before been exclusively reserved for minority language.

Globalization, regionalisation and privatization: challenging the national concept

In the eighties public service broadcasting in Austria was increasingly challenged by commercialization and transnational media flows, in radio by commercial stations transmitting from neighbouring countries where the state monopoly had already been abandoned, in TV due to satellite transmission of programmes from different sources. Whereas satellite broadcasting significantly increased the supply for German speakers in Austria, it offered only little for the Slovenian-speakers. RTV Slovenija only started a few years ago with satellite transmission and programmes are only receivable with a rather expensive decoding box.

Another challenge arose for the state monopoly on broadcasting from social movements which made minority rights one of their topics. Besides the traditional journalistic forms, new print media and the alternative press developed, because traditional media did not sufficiently reflect the concerns of different social movements. Alternative media proved to be productive in the field of minorities, on the one hand with media that addressed also an audience within the majority population, on the other hand with publications in minority languages. In most Western European countries in this phase non-commercial private radio stations emerged, some of them broadcasting in minority languages, others lent their antenna to specific programmes for migrant communities and autochthonous minorities. Since 1999 in Southern Carinthia one of these private non-commercial stations has been providing a 24-hour programme in Slovenian. As it can serve as an experimental space, it is also attempting to produce bi-lingual programmes which can serve as an interface between the two linguistically separated public spheres. But the state subsidies which had been granted in the beginning have been cancelled and the station suffers from a constant lack of financial means.

The public service broadcasting company responded to the different challenges with increasing regionalization, allowing half an hour of TV programme a week for in Austria living minorities and enlarging the number of radio programmes in minority languages, but not questioning the niche character of these programmes. In July 2001 the public broadcasting company signed an agreement of cooperation with the Slovenian private radio in Carinthia which "saved" the private radio but links it in important decisions to the public service.

Nevertheless, connected with regionalization, a growing consciousness for minority issues could be felt in European institutions. The Council of Europe's Charter for Regional and Minority Languages (1992) marks a change of paradigms in this field. The Charter is the first legally binding instrument in this field and is not based on the spirit of "negative protection" but states the need to take positive action. More than ten years elapsed from the beginning of the work for the charter until first factual results could be achieved. This shows how reluctant states are in granting minority rights as part of hard core law. With the disintegration of the two bloc system in Europe new frontiers have been drawn, new nation states appeared and new majority-minority relationships emerged. Minority issues moved with the outbreak of armed ethnic conflicts and the rise of racist and xenophobe actions in Western Europe to the top of the agenda of international and European institutions and organizations, a need for confidence-building and positive action was recognized. In its Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (1995), the Council of Europe there is no restrictive definition of the term minority as in previous documents and therefore migrant communities can be

considered as included. Furthermore, the ratifying states oblige themselves to restrain from assimilatory practices and to foster intercultural dialogue, especially in the field of media, culture, and education. Austria has ratified both documents and thus acknowledged standards for minority media. But - like many other European states - Austria has only codified the unsatisfactory status quo.

Media supply and audience expectations

The analytical framework in this chapter focuses on the three basic functions of communication, the propositional, the social and the interactive. As the realization of these three functions involves communicator and recipient, both sides have been considered. It relies on a collection of empirical data (Busch 1998): throughout one month the content of the production of Slovenian media with actual character in Carinthia was analysed. Qualitative interviews with Slovenian speaking persons from different social backgrounds and from different age groups were held on the basis of media diaries written by the interviewees during one month and the "through-the-book method" was used to find out what articles in the minority press had actually been read by the interviewees.

Social background

Until the 1960s the Slovenian minority was socially and economically a rather homogenous group settling in a clearly defined area. Since then the structure has become very heterogenous and does not differ significantly from the German-speaking population. Among the elder generation there still is a relatively higher percentage active in the agricultural sector, but among the younger people the educational level is higher than among the majority population.(Reiterer 1996). Conceptions of cultural identity are also very differentiated:those who are active and engaged in cultural and social activities from Slovenian organizations read minority language papers regularly (Each of the three weeklies has a circulation of about 3,000 per copy). Radio and TV guarantee anonymous reception and play an important role for those who do not want to declare themselves members of the minority community. (Up to 20,000 people watch TV programmes in Slovenian language on Sundays)

As there is only little offered in Austrian media in Slovenian language and as media from neighbouring Slovenia do not play an important role among the Slovenian population in Carinthia, media habits among minority audience resemble those among the majority. Most of the time spent in presence of media is spent in a German-language context. Minority media are built into the daily media routine as a complement. Current affairs, international and national politics are taken from majority media. As the daily media contact is mostly contact with the German language, this also has considerable consequences on the language situation in the region.

Slovenian media as a complement

The analysis of the manifest content of the Slovenian weeklies published in Carinthia shows that in both papers reporting about the "internal" life of the minority group is the most important issue. Approximately three quarters of the available space are dedicated to such articles. Reporting about international issues, about Austrian politics and regional affairesis rather insignificant. The only field that has relatively more weight than in German language media is information about neighboring Slovenia and the Alpe-Adria region. Topics that are regularly present in dailies or weeklies such as health care, environment, technology, etc. are almost absent. Whereas in the past print media in Slovenian language showed a similar profile to media in majority language covering a wide range of topics they have gradually lost this function and developed into special interest media. The profile of the weekly Slovenian TV emission on the Austrian public service TV channel is amazingly parallel to the profile of the papers. The specialization of the Slovenian media correspond also to the expectations of recipients: Interviewees confirmed that they do not read in the minority papers information they have already received from media in majority language.

This thematic reduction in the Slovenian media in Carinthia certainly has its effects on the language situation. Various linguistic surveys carried out in Carinthia speak of a rapid decline of the Slovenian language in Austria (Lausegger, 1992) and describe difficulties among bi-lingual speakers in finding the appropriate vocabulary when it comes to topics of "modern" life (Domej, 1980 and Lausegger, 1994). And these are precisely the topics which are not present in the Slovenian media.

Reconstructing the village square

It is striking in the actual profile of the two papers that messages aiming at social relationship take almost one fourth of the available space. This segment is composed of announcements of public events within the minority community such as meetings, cultural representations, concerts, educational courses etc. Both papers have a regular column with congratulations for readers who celebrate birthdays, marriages etc. Radio request programmes with the same kind of congratulations have the highest popularity. Most interviewees confirmed that information about members of the minority community were those they looked at first, for them a picture of a relative or an acquaintance was one of the most important incentives to read an article. They also explained that they would read or listen more attentively to information concerning their own village or a neighbouring village than to others. Especially interviewees who had moved out of the bi-lingual region affirmedthat such information helped them to "keep up" with the village life and to continue to feel somehow part of it. Minority papers, radio and TV programmes seem to be some kind of social cement replacing to some extent communication in the village square.

Among the producers of Slovenian media in Carinthia one can notice a certain tendency towards self-censorship. Especially TV producers are very much aware of the fact that German- speaking Carinthians occasionally watch these programmes. Therefore producers, but also their audience, do not want conflicts within the minority to be raised in these programmes. The Slovenian TV emission has to fulfil the somewhat contradictory expectations of being representative in a positive sense for the minority

community in the eyes of the German- speaking audience and of creating social cement for the minority community. Therefore programmes often show elements of both, promotional films and home videos.

A feeling of "Heimat"

Majority media very rarely notice members and activities of the minority community or, if they do, it is often with a negative connotation. Slovenian media create a communicative space - which is not identical with the everyday communication space - where cultural Slovenian identity can be worked upon. They create some kind of "world within a world", where communication about topics that are not present elsewhere can take place and can take place in a code that is characteristic for this social group. All parties involved in the communication process (producers, recipients and cited authorities) belong to this in-group. For recipients it is crucial to be noticed as group members, to read and hear about activities they have participated in or that have taken place in their immediate surrounding. Both elements of identity construction, being noticed as an individual and feedback, seldom present in "big" media, can be found in minority media. Whereas in direct personal communication this takes place immediately, in minority media this takes place with delay in time and distance in space. This leaves more freedom of interpretation of the feedback for the recipients.

The interviewees of different age groups gave a clear preference to programmes containing a high share of typically Slovenian music and spoken programmes in the local dialects (and not in the standard language). Music appeals to a more emotional level, does not bind cognitive activities as much as the spoken word and leaves a large interpretative space from being a symbol of ethnic belonging to simply triggering memories. In the dialect programmes for the interviewees the content was less important than the fact that the dialect could be heard in a situation that is normally reserved for standard language. When form becomes dominant and content moves to the background, the form takes up new connotations and enters the field of everyday life myths (Barthes, 1964). Media legitimizes the use of dialect and creates a space of "heimat", the illusion of a situation in which there are no social constraints. Dialect makes these programmes more acceptable for people, who do not consider themselves members of the minority community.

Language not only has on the level of "parole" an identity-founding component, but also on the level of "langue", in the sense that it can mark the belonging to a particular group for outside purpose and create this feeling for the internal purpose. In Carinthia the Slovenian language has such a connotation. Research projects about the discursive construction of the Austrian national identity (Wodak et al., 1996) have shown that also among German-speaking Austrians language has this symbol character to define in- and out-groups. For minority group members this means that what they have to construct is a more or less balanced double identity on the language level. In order to escape this stress, the minority identity is often lived as a private, family, or as a "weekend" identity. This study seems to confirm that Slovenian media are also being used in this sense. Among younger interviewees there was also another strategy consisting in considering multilingualism as life quality, as life style, and to escape the identity stress in this way.

Conclusions

In the process of media diversification and globalization minority media have been marginalized. The nation state ideology striving at homogenizing heterogenous populations has created language barriers in the access to media. As there are very few interfaces between minority media and main stream media, minority media form a system apart and create a public sphere of their own. The Carinthian example shows that for the minority community they are rather a complement to media in majority language and that they have gradually lost their exclusiveness within the minority audience.

Nevertheless, minority media fulfill for the minority community important functions of social coherence and contribute to identity construction. Multilingualism has become a characteristic feature of post-modern societies and linguistic affiliation or ethnic identity are only elements in the multilayered social identities of today. Multilingualism is considered increasingly a question of life quality and life style. For media this means that considerable effort should be made on developing multilingual programmes where the presence of more than one language becomes something "normal". In this multilingual public sphere, not only prestigious languages that can serve as lingua franca in a large sense have a place, but also minority languages. As languages of neighbourhood and contact they are an expression of cultural pluralism.

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Maintenance and Promotion of Tamazight: the Role of the Electronic Media

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Abstract

Programmes of *Endangered Languages'* maintenance and promotion have all too often focused on Education (especially formal schooling) as the most reliable and effective means for achieving their aims and objectives. However, electronic media –whose technological devices have become more available and affordable – can also play an important role in attaining the set objectives. This is particularly true for those endangered languages -such as Tamazight (i.e. Berber)- which are mostly *oral* and *banned* from school (because of the State's adoption of an overt assimilationist policy), are virtually absent from the official media (especially TV), and whose speakers are (a) illiterate, in their majority, and (b) have come to live in areas where a language other than their mother tongue is dominant and hence forced to shift to it. It is contended in this paper that, even the traditional electronic media (the Radio and TV), let alone the possibilities offered by the new information technologies tools (e.g. the Internet), can provide additional and efficient means to not only maintain Tamazight, but also enable its speakers to make up for lost opportunities caused by the de facto denial of their linguistic and cultural rights. Support for the contention here made comes from (a) the slowness and coverage-limited of educational maintenance programmes, (b) the relative ease with which electronic media–based maintenance programmes can be devised and implemented, (c) the wide range of their coverage, and (d) their not requiring prior literacy.

0. Introduction

Notwithstanding the real threat posed to societies (in both the developed and the underdeveloped worlds) by a potentially homogenising "cultural globalisation", speakers of endangered languages can draw a number of benefits from the use of the tools made available by the new "information and communications technologies" (ICTs). To be sure, this cultural globalisation is relentlessly being pushed through mainly by American-led and Japanese-led giant "cultural industries" which own multimedia "global information networks" and seek to introduce new norms for the cultural life and the social functioning of peoples all around the world, within the framework of what has been baptised the "global information society". However, as McClusky (1997) states, "the enormous diversity of cultures and languages in the world will cut short the dreams of those who see 'global' as meaning 'monolingual' or 'homogeneous' ". Some socio-cultural areas where the use of the new ITC's tools will be beneficial, especially as concerns endangered languages, are: language revitalisation, maintenance and promotion; reaffirmation of social and cultural identity ties. The present paper discusses the role that some electronic media (chiefly Radio and TV) can play in the maintenance and promotion of the Amazigh language (also called Tamazight). As for the role of the Internet, it is taken up by Ouakrime (in this volume). I begin by addressing the following questions: "Is Tamazight an endangered language and, hence, in need of maintenance, and promotion?," and "Why the recourse to electronic media instead of the educational system, for its maintenance?". I then present and evaluate (succinctly) the existing Moroccan and Algerian Radio and TV programmes in Tamazight. Finally, I highlight those organisational aspects of the traditional electronic media (Radio and TV) that can help in effecting a language maintenance programme (in this case that of Tamazight). Drawing on insights from what is being done elsewhere, I put forward a tentative plan where I suggest some changes in the State's media policy. If effected, they will make these media, in addition to fulfilling their entertainment function, play the role of hopefully effectivemeans for the development, maintenance and promotion of Tamazight.

1. Tamazight Maintenance Through Electronic Media: a Question of Pertinence

Before proceeding to the aforementioned evaluation and proposal, the two questions raised above (cf. end of the Introduction) must be answered. For upon answering them depend the relevance of topic here investigated to the theme of the Conference and my proposal's pertinence.

1.1. How Endangered is Tamazight?

While it is patently clear to the Amazigh people (particularly the militants in the many cultural associations) that their mother tongue, which has been disparaged and placed under an officially sanctioned de facto siege for decades by the pan-Arabist ruling elite, is in a situation of endangerment, the world's academic

community must be convinced of this. A review of previous works on endangered languages, language attrition, shift, loss (or death) (cf. for e.g. Dorian, 1981; Dorian (ed.), 1989; Fishman, 1991) or more recent ones (cf. for e.g. Kindell, 2000; Landweer, 2001; Crawford, 1996, El Aissati, 1996, and the referencestherein cited) affords us established criteria with which we can not only demonstrate that Tamazight is an endangered language but also assess the degree of its endangerment (see also Ouakrime's discussion in this volume).

Although the situation of Tamazight does not fit the "most simplistic" definition of an endangered language (viz. a language used only by some "critical number of speakers", Kindell, op. cit.), it presents many a characteristic of endangered, if not outright *moribund* languages. It is true that, according to the most conservative estimates (the exact figures are withheld for political reasons!), the Amazighs in Morocco form half the country's population (put at 30 million souls, by the 1994 Census). However, how many of these 15 millions have a high fluency in Tamazight? How many use it in a domain other than the home? How many of them have been forced, for instrumental and/or integrative purposes, to abandon their mother tongue? Answers to questions such as these will provide a good idea about the degree of endangerment of this language. But there is more. For, of the languages that make up the linguistic repertoire in Morocco, Tamazight is awarded the lowest sociolinguistic status. It is also locked into an unstable bilingualism with Moroccan Arabic (hereinafterMA), the most vital variety in Morocco (cf. Saib, 2001). The encroachment of MA on Tamazight, has led to the extinction of many an Amazigh dialect (e.g. Ghomara and Senhaja of Srair in Northern Morocco). Moreover, excluding Tashelhiyt speakers who use Tamazight in intra-group contexts wherever they may live, fluency in Tamazight correlates with "rurality"(as rural people still speak it in intra-group communication) and old age (as younger generations, especially urbanised ones, prefer to use MA). In addition, its use has declined in domains where it was once secure (even the home where MA is used by the young). In fact, a case can even be made for Tamazight having reached a *moribund* stage in urbanised and MA-dominated areas, since (a) because of the stigmatisation associated with it, the great majority of the ethnically Amazigh children refuse to learn it as a mother tongue, and (b) growing numbers of individualist, pragmatic and materialist parents (cf. Crawford, op. cit.) fail to teach the language to their children. There is, thus, a rupture in the inter-generational transmission, which is one main cause for language shift, loss, and even death.

Another set of reasons pointing to the decline of Tamazight, or even to its loss if nothing is done, has to do with the fact that the frequently cited causes for language shift and loss (cf. for e.g. Fasold, 1984; El Aissati, 1996, and the references therein cited) are prominently present in the Moroccan context. These are: *migration* (in our case internal); *industrialisation; school language* (Standard Arabic (SA) and French, which are non mother tongues) "and other government pressures" (see below); *urbanisation* (as heavily urbanised areas are predominantly Arab-speaking); "higher *prestige* for the language being shifted to"(even though MA is lower in prestige than SA). To these may be added: "lack of a body of literature [in our case, there is a good body of it], and dynamic readers who can read and write it"; "lack of prestige and the passionate support of its speakers", mentioned in an SIL document entitled "FAQ about Endangered Languages". They also underscore the fact that Tamazight is, indeed, an endangered language.

A few *positive steps* have been taken, of late, at the highest official level, even though they do not answer – or answer minimally only – the affirmativeaspirations of the Amazigh militants (consigned in the Agadir Charter, Aug. 1991, and in the Amazigh Manifesto of March 2000, which were officially sent to both the government and the Palace). They concern (a) the introduction of the teaching of Tamazight in the public school system at the pre-school and grammatical levels (cf. Speech of the late King, 20 August 1994; the minimalist proposal of the National Charter on Education and Training, June 1999; Speech of the present King (Mohammed VI), 30 July 2001), (b) the King's use of the term "*al-'amazighiya*" (i.e. Tamazight) –instead of "*lahajat*" (dialects)- implicitly recognising that it is a language and not merely a cluster of mutually unintelligible "dialects", with all the negative connotations that this latter term implies. But the most significant positive step, this year, is the King's decision to create what he called the "*Royal Institute for Amazigh Culture*", to be placed under his direct supervision and entrusted with the task of (a) "devising schemes for the inclusion of Tamazight teaching in the educational system and overseeing their implementation" and (b) "proposing appropriate policies for the reinforcement of Tamazight's position in the social, cultural, national media and local and regional affairs domains"[my translation: J.S].

Judging from *the positive reactions* of many militant Amazigh Cultural Associations, conveyed through official press communiqués, the King's decision has been received with a great deal of satisfaction by the overwhelming majority of the Amazigh speakers. Many militant Amazighists have liked and welcomed the King's decision to take away the Amazigh question from the hands of the government. This is so because, although this latter is claimed to be a "consensual" government, it is led by the self-proclaimed "democratic" Koutla (Alliance), composed of deeply pan-Arabist political parties whose ideology is inspired by that of the Baathist parties of Syria and Iraq, which are hostile to all non-Arabic indigenous languages (cf. the fate reserved to Assyrian and Kurdish, for example). Ever since the country's independence from France and Spain, they have not ceased to proclaim that Morocco is an "Arab country"(sic) and that all Moroccans are "Arabs"(sic). They have also relentlessly endeavoured to impose what Amazighists view as a "rigid ideological, linguistic and cultural uniformity" which excludes political, linguistic and cultural diversity and is directed primarily against Tamazight. Applying a "linguicidal" policy, they continuously disparaged this latter, banned it from school and the media (except for Radio broadcasts of 4 hours for each dialect), and ostracised anyone who showed loyalty to his/her Amazighity. This has contributed greatly to the endangerment of Tamazight.

For some Amazigh militants, the decision taken, very positive though it is, falls well short of the demanded

official proclamation of the "Amazighity" of Morocco (cf. the Amazigh Manifesto), the constitutional recognition of Tamazight as a national –though not official– language alongside SA, or the reconsideration of the all-out Arabization of all the sectors of the Moroccan public life. They have not forgotten the Istiqlal Party's draft bill, withdrawn from the parliament but sneakily implemented through one of the current Prime Minister's directives, which imposes SA as the sole administrative language and excludes other languages, in particular Tamazight (even for monolingual speakers)). Nor have they forgotten the triumphalist statements about the great success achieved in Arabizing the masses like the one made by Abdelhadi Tazi in Nov. 1984 (cf. Chafiq, 1989, p. 96) which goes as follows: "*If I had to summarize the process of Arabization that took place during the last quarter of a century in the life of modern Morocco, I would say: what the Kingdom of Morocco has achieved since the return of King Mohammed V from exile [1955] is far more than what Morocco achieved in the long historical period since [686 A.D] the conquest of Uqbat Ben Nafi'*" (Translated by Alamasude, 1999).

Statements such as these and the "linguicidal" policies (cf. Mokhlis, 1997, and articles in *Agraw Amazigh*) which they reaffirm show the true aim of Arabization: it is to Arabize everybody and everything in Morocco; it is not to replace French by Arabic. What should be stressed here, again, is that the maintenance of this exclusionist policy towards Tamazight and the denial of full linguistic and cultural rights for its speakers greatly increase its endangerment.

Concerning the place afforded Tamazight in the electronic media, no new initiative has been taken, though it was rumoured that 6 hours (2 for each dialect) would be added to the Tamazight Radio programmes. The situation is, then, that of a status quo (see below), especially in what concerns TV (where the time allotted is only 5 minutes for each dialect to present the news). However, the King's mentioning of the reinforcement of the position of Tamazight in the media indicates that some improvements are forthcoming. This brings us to the second question, raised above (cf. end of the Introduction), as to why the proposition to use electronic media for the maintenance of Tamazight instead of the expected educational system.

1.2. Maintenance through Electronic Media vs through the Educational System

The educational system is, logically enough, the most well-known and frequently advocated means for effecting the maintenance and promotion of minority, indigenous and endangered languages. And indeed, educational programmes proposed to fulfil such function, if there are well designed , will yield a sizeable body of teaching materials as well as other means to fix both the linguistic aspects and the cultural heritage of these languages. They may also achieve a high degree of success in revitalising threatened languages and in making their speakers take pride in knowing aspects of their heritage, preserving them and readying themselves to transmit them to the next generation. Thus, educational maintenance programmes are necessary and must be used, even in the Moroccan context, in spite of the bad state of our school system.

Be this as it may, educational maintenance programmes also suffer from a number of pitfalls, some of which are mentioned here. First, they are, as a general rule, devised for schooled people (chiefly the young, who have learned another, often dominant language) and not for the whole population (the majority of which is not literate). Second, they are often adjunct "special "and non degree programmes, added to those required by the educational authorities for getting a formal education. In both the immigration and indigenous contexts, this may bring stigmatisation over the participants in such programmes. Third, the scheduling of their courses is often made for outside the curriculum time, sometimes as a Saturday school schedule. Fifth, oftentimes the teaching materials that they require are difficult to design and costly to produce. Sixth, they are not always taught by specially trained native teachers. Seventh, even as adjunct programmes, they are subject to the often heavy school administration procedures. Eighth, they require a long time to yield good results. In the meantime, the erosion of endangered languages (in our case Tamazight) will continue in earnest.

By contrast, electronic media maintenance programmes will be easier to design and implement, will have a wide range of coverage (often extending beyond national borders) and impact (especially TV, since, as the saying goes, "a picture is worth a thousand words"). This does not mean, however, that they do not involve constraints (political and economical). Non democratic governments, hiding behind State security arguments, may not grant permission to devise such programmes, in the first place. And assuming that such a permission is granted, the cost required by such programmes (electronic equipment, personnel, etc.) may be deemed prohibitive.

In spite of these constraints, electronic Radio and TV maintenance programmes offer a number of advantages. For one thing, they are, more often than not, quite lively and attractive. As such, they have great impact and captivate the attention of the learners. As far as cost is concerned, the Radio programmes do not require a heavy investment. As for TV and other means associated with it, if the equipment is not supplied by the State or an NGO, the initial investment may be substantial; yet, the share of each individual may be reasonable as the cost would be incurred by the whole community. Other characteristic features of the electronic media, which represent their major advantages, are: (a) they can reach all the people to whom the programmes are transmitted, (b) they do not require prior formal literacy, and (c) as this has been documented elsewhere, they can yield good results in a short time. This is very important as the speed with which the factors of endangerment are offset (e.g. through language shift reversal) can be crucial.

In suggesting that the electronic media can play an efficient role in Tamazight maintenance and promotion, I do not mean to belittle the role of the educational system. One major consideration which led me to give more weight to electronic media for achieving the task at hand has to do with the high illiteracy rates recorded in

Morocco : 55% (or 10.6 million) for Moroccans aged 10 years and more (cf. 1994 Census). As has been established, electronic media do not require prior literacy Another consideration has to do with the fact that maintaining and promoting Tamazight through schooling, if it ever materialises in Morocco, will be both slow and less effective.This scepticism comes from knowledge of how skilful are the anti-Tamazight pan-Arabist ruling elites at sabotaging programmes and emptying decisions, even royal ones, from their substance. After all, have they not ignored King Hassan II's decision of 20 August 1994? Have they not lobbied hard – within the Educational Reform Commission - to make Tamazight teaching elective, a regional affairand dependent upon the availability of means at the local level? Have they not had the Educational Charter stipulate that this teaching be effected , not for the sake of Tamazight or its maintenance, but for the benefit of learning the official language (SA)?

Support for the position here taken also comes from the experiences of certain indigenous communities which have appropriated and used old electronic media (Radio, cf. Moore, 1989) and the new media technologies (TV and the Internet) for the purpose of strengthening and protecting their languages and cultures from the invasion of mainstream media, be they national or global (cf. Meadows, 1995; Cantin, 2000; the special issue of *Cultural Survival Quarterly*, edited by Cisler, 1998). Though such actions are taken in reaction to the oft distorted, if not blatantly racist, mainstream media representation of indigenous peoples, a very important side benefit coming from them is the designing of maintenance and promotion programmes for these peoples' languages and cultures using old and new electronic media. This is the direction towards which the indigenous people of Morocco and North Africa – the Imazighen (pl. of Amazigh) as they prefer to call themselves – are resolutely heading despite the hostility – and hence the refusal up to now – of their requests by the "powers that be."

2. Tamazight Maintenance through Electronic Media: A Tentative Proposal

As is well-known, Radio, TV and audio-visual means have been used for quite some time now in Education, starting with what are called "small media (radio-cassette recordings, slides, etc.) and moving on to "major media" (Radio and TV). Initially, they fulfilled the function of support tools in the teaching strategies of formal education. With the major developments achieved by the new ITC's, many computer assisted courses have been devised in various academic fields and subjects. So much so that computer-assisted learning has been presented as a more efficient and flexible interactive alternative to formal classroom learning.. This goes to say that electronic media, even non "high-tech" ones, offer a great many educational possibilities. In this part of the paper, I explore the possibilities offeredby Radio and TV for the maintenance of endangered languages, using Tamazight as an example. My exploration begins by the elicitation of the position of Tamazight in the Moroccan Radio and TV, moves to review the use of these media in the maintenance and promotion of endangered languages, and then ends with putting forward a maintenance proposal for Tamazight.

2.1. Tamazight in the Moroccan Radio and TV

Compared to the place accorded to Arabic, and even to French, in the Moroccan electronic media, the one afforded Tamazight is that of the proverbial "poor relative". This obtains for Radio broadcasts; it obtains even more for those of TV. Indeed, while Arabic Radio programmes run for 24h, the ones devoted to Tamazight last for only 12h/day (from 12:00 to 24:00, for the three dialectical areas). As for TV, after being absent from it for decades, Tamazight has been awarded, since 1994 (after the Goulmima incident and the pressure from Human Rights Organisations), 15 min (5 minutes. for each dialectical area) all devoted to news. This applies only to Channel 1(the National TV station). As for Channel 2 (a formerly privately owned cable station), even though it has been saved from liquidation by the State, hence by tax-payers money, it has not deemed it necessary to reserve a fixed period from its air time to Tamazight. Yet, a percentage of every Moroccan's monthly utility bill is added to the already included "Audio-visual Tax" and earmarked for Channel 2.

In researching this topic, I did not come across any studies devoted to Tamazight Radio, save a 1983 monograph written in Arabic by a student (El Ghaydani) from the High Institute of Journalism. It contains a good deal of information about the historical development of the Moroccan Radio, in general, and the Tamazight Section within it, in particular. The programmes focused upon are those of the Tamazight of Central Morocco.

According to El Ghaydani, Tamazight Radio presents 14 programmes per week, for each dialectical area, which carry the same names (irrespective of the dialect). The primary mission set for this Radio is to entertain. As concerns the types of programmes, they are: news bulletins; cultural and informative/guidance programmes; music and entertainment. Apart from the news, whose contents are clear, the second type of programmes includes segments on "literature", "literary criticism", "religious studies", "theatre", "cinema", "sciences", and "heritage revival"(El Ghaydani, 1983: 27) Given the severe constraints of time, some segments run for 10 min and others for 15 min, only (El Ghaydani, op. cit., p. 30).

According to the daily schedules for the month of July 2001, which I could get, the time allotted is the same and the distribution of programme types is essentially the same. However, new segments (e.g. specific features from the regions; women's issues, health issues; literary discussions, duplex discussion sessions combined with callers' questions; sports, weather forecast; maritime news, etc.) have been added. Seasonal segments also appeared on the schedule: interviews with vacationing Moroccan migrant workers, beach-goers and children at Summer camps; often combined with listeners' music requests. Some of the segments are broadcast from two regional Radio Stations (Agadir for Tashelhiyt, Tetouan for Tarifiyt), but none is broadcast for the Central Moroccan dialect from the regional station of Fes, owing to the Andalusian Fassis' allergy to anything Amazigh!.

Unfortunately, the majority of the programmes are not archived, it is said for lack of space(!).

Of interest to us is that some Radio programmes and programme segments, with an extension in time and slight content modifications, can serve for both Tamazight language and culture maintenance. The examination of the schedule has revealed that some segments are made up of full-fledged poems, riddles or song lines elicitation and explanation, etc. These are good candidates for inclusion in a Tamazight maintenance programme. What about TV?

The place of Tamazight on TV verges on the ridiculous. Of the 18 and a half hours of transmission, a number of which are filled with documentary films and Egyptian soap operas, could not some time other than the ridiculous 15 minutes be allotted to Tamazight? Clearly, the decision is political and a part of the exclusionist measures seeking the death of Tamazight. For, as is well-known, TV has a great impact: witness the learning of the Egyptian dialect by Moroccans of all walks of life because of a large exposure to it thanks to Egyptian soap operas and serials shown on TV.

According to my interviewee, the news to be presented obey a certain hierarchy: amongst national news, the top priority is given to royal activities; the second priority is accorded the government's activities; social issues concerning Tamazight come next, followed by a segment on international news, and another on sports and weather. As of last year, our interviewee said, the rigidity with which the contents of the news bulletins were selected has given way to a great deal of flexibility. Since then, Tamazight newscasters were allowed to take personal initiatives and were given all the means to do so, free of any censorship. They were also given a new studio and space where to keep their archives. For instance, they made interviews, in Tamazight, with Amazigh government ministers, university professors, engineers and other professionals, activists in associations, and people from the regions. They also made very informative field reports on regional fairs and festivals, on the living conditions of the Imazighen, etc. However, the main black spots are: the very limited time allotted (see above) and the timing of the news bulletins (14h30, a time at which people are going back to work and children are in the classrooms). Needless to say that the government will be called upon to establish some balance and allot more air time and means to Tamazight programmes, especially after the King's decision of 30 July 2001. They will have to do better than what is done in neighbouring Algeria, the Tamazight programmes of which I present next.

2.2. Tamazight in the Algerian Electronic media

Despite the similarities between the policies of the Algerian and Moroccan governments towards Tamazight (cf. Saib, 2000), this language fares better in the Algerian media. Yet, there too, more additional efforts are needed. The State has reserved a whole Radio channel (Channel 2, referred to as "Amataf wissin" or "Erradio tissnat") to the indigenous and native language of all North Africa: Tamazight. The other two channels (1 and 3) are reserved, respectively, to Arabic and French.

The time allotted to Radio programmes in Tamazight, which was limited to just 6 hours/a day (another similarity with the Moroccan policy!), has been extended to 19 hours, after 1995, date of the creation of the "High Commissariat for Amazighity", as a measure to soothe street-protesting Amazighs. They start at 6:00 (local time: GMT + 1). According to a regular Moroccan listener from Figuig (a town lying a few kms away from the Algerian border), the Algerian Channel 2 presents a variety of very interesting programmes. The news are presented alternatively by journalists (one for every day) belonging to the four Tamazight dialectical areas of Algeria (Kabylia, Chawia, Mzab, the Tuareg deep south). Tamazight-speaking Algerian correspondents abroad participate in the programme (cf. the correspondents in Bosnia and Kosovo). To offset the lexical differences between the dialects, concerted efforts are made to unify and standardise the terminology used. Thus, the same agreed upon standardised terms are continuously used by the journalists. However, interviewees are free to use any dialect or a mixed code (Tamazight + Arabic or French)

Amongst other programmes, there are features reports on news-worthy events (cultural or otherwise concerning Tamazight) taking place in Algeria or abroad. There are also round-table debates on all subjects (including Amazigh identity), discussions with specialists on various issues, interviews (in the studio or in the field), programmes on heritage (history, arts, archaeology), sports, reports on activities of Amazigh cultural associations (even Moroccan ones). My interviewee also said that soccer football matches are reported on entirely in Tamazight, something which will certainly help the maintenance of this threatened language. Another important feature for the topic investigated in this paper is a *daily language course* of 7 minutes. But, given the contents of the programmes, many of them can easily be recast to fulfil a maintenance function for Tamazight.

Tamazight is also more present on Algerian TV, which operates 24 hours/day. Fixed programmes are reserved to it: (a) full news bulletins of 20 min. alternatively presented by a journalist from one of the dialectical areas (cf. above), at 16:00 (local time) ; a 15 min. religious programme every Friday; at least one Tamazight song in the variety show of Thursdays. Tamazight is also included in the other programmes of Algerian TV . To this effect, segments varying in duration are broadcast: e.g. a segment about old and modern Tamazight singers within musical variety shows; debates and interviews concerning any subject (cf. Radio programmes); reports on Tamazight areas; films. Contrary to what occurs on the Radio, there are no Tamazight language courses. However, as there does not seem to be a restriction on the programmes to be included, it ought to be possible to add Tamazight maintenance programmes.

2.3. A Tentative Proposal

In this last section of the paper, I would like to highlight some functions of the traditional electronic media (Radio and TV) in a programme for Tamazight maintenance and promotion. I also put forward a tentative proposal , concerning the State's media policy, that will make these

media play their normal role in developing, maintaining and promoting Tamazight via these media.

There are a number of electronic media functions that are very helpful for language maintenance. Two that can be singled out here are: a documentation function and a favourable image projection function. Concerning the former function, the electronic media can gather rich archive collections of materials on Tamazight oral literature (songs, poems, riddles, tales of all kinds, etc.) and recordings preserving the language's authentic voices (hence the genuine accentual and intonational features of Tamazight). These are very essential documents from which teaching material designers can draw. Thanks to the incredible progress realised by new ITC's, long lasting, high fidelity means with huge storage capacity (e.g. CD-ROM's) have been created. These can be used for the archives as they do not deteriorate easily and they take very little space.

The second media function – positive image projection - is also very helpful for language maintenance programmes (Tamazight maintenance included). It has been documented all throughout the world that the more positive is the image projected by the official media on the speakers of an endangered language, the easier it is to convince people belonging to the mainstream segment of the population to accept and support the language maintenance efforts engaged into. In the case of Morocco and Algeria, the change in tone of the media must be paralleled by a similar change in tone of the politicians and the "powers that be". The media, for instance, should stress the fact that Tamazight speakers and Arabic speakers are here to stay and that no group is going to be thrown into the ocean. Programmes discussing and explaining human rights, civil rights, and cultural rights will be very helpful in this regard. Anti-Tamazight politicians should reconsider their ideological stance, borrowed from the Syrian and Iraqi Baathist ideology of "Arab nationalism", and convince themselves that their fellow Amazigh countrymen and countrywomen have the right to be and feel different if they so-choose and to maintain and promote their native language. After all this is part of the Universal human rights.

Coming now to my tentative proposal, I would like to stress at the outset that one main element of it is the State's full involvement. Indeed, the surest way to secure that there is maintenance of Tamazight is for the State to recognise its past errors, commit itself to, and fully support, programmes specially designed for such purpose. This obtains for both the yet to be designed educationally-based and media-based maintenance programmes. A sine qua non condition is that the design be effected by Amazigh specialists in programme design and Educational Sciences. The same goes for the media programmes.

Two plans can be entertained. A conservative plan would call for making a few changes in the existing Radio and TV programmes. For instance, the time allotted to Tamazight in the Moroccan Radio should at least match that given to this language in Algerian Radio (see above). Other changes may be operated following the Algerian model. The same may be suggested for TV. In any event, there should be an increase in the air time and a generalisation of the use of regional radio stations (Agadir, Tetouan, and Fes) with sizeable Tamazight segments. The already existing satellite service should be used to reach Moroccans living abroad.

A less conservative plan will call for the creation of two State-funded Tamazight stations (one for Radio transmissions and the other for TV transmissions) equipped with strongly- powered relay stations so that they can cover the whole national territory. Again, Satellite service should be used to reach our immigrants. So as not to institute a media "apartheid", joint programmes (Arabic + Tamazight) should be encouraged in TV programmes on all stations, including Channel 2. The great success achieved by the privately owned BRTV (Berber TV), broadcasting in Algerian Tamazight 4 hours/day from Paris, via satellite, should encourage the creation of State-owned Tamazight TV stations (Cf. Humblot, 2001).

Whatever plan is chosen, strong media-based Tamazight teaching programmes must be devised and target the young. It is the young , especially those living in urban centres, who need to learn their mother tongue: Tamazight. Insights should be drawn from the revitalisation programmes that have been used elsewhere in the world (cf. UNESCO Reports and Monographs). Other programmes should target other interested groups: adult Amazighs; Arabic speakers; foreigners; Administrators; Justice, Health and Security personnel; etc. As was suggested in Saib (1996), we may envisage producing courses in Tamazight for specific purposes.

In a world living under the tyranny of the economical, the question of cost will inevitably arise. Is Tamazight, and hence the Imazighen, worth the cost required by the programmes of maintenance? The question has already come up and the answer to it is clear. How many millions of dirhams are spent yearly on international conferences and symposia that have no benefit for Morocco save to enable it to be on the news for a short time and exhibit the culinary skills of its Chefs? Besides, the State allocates a yearly budget somewhere between 1,200,000 and 1,400,000 dirhams to the Moroccan Institute of Arabization in addition to paying salaries for 180 employees (the majority of whom are university professors). When we know that this Institute has been in existence since 1963, we can imagine how much money it has engulfed . Yet, besides a special type-writer, it has produced only some glossaries. Morocco also houses the Arab League's Pan-Arab Bureau of Arabization in Rabat and contribute huge sums of money for its work. At the same time, no money is allocated for the development and teaching of Tamazight, Tamazight newspapers and journals, nor to Tamazight cultural associations!.

Given the hostile policy towards Tamazight (of the last 44 years), the denial of the Imazighen's linguistic rights and the endangerment situation in which this has placed their language, double or triple the budget of the Institute of Arabization should be allocated to the newly created *Royal Institute for Amazigh Culture*. This would be but a small compensation and consolation for the damage purposely inflicted.

Conclusion

This paper aimed at exploring the role that electronic media can play in developing, maintaining and promoting Tamazight. This is made necessary by a number of facts, amongst which mention can be made of three (for the others see Sect. 1.1 – 1.2). First, though Tamazight is spoken by millions of people, the "linguicidal" policies applied against it for the last 44 years have rendered it an endangered language (Sect. 1.1). Second, a school-based maintenance programme for Tamazight, if ever it is designed and implemented, would be slow and ,hence, would require a long time before achieving acceptable results. By contrast, an electronic media-based maintenance would attain good results as it will have a wide range of coverage and great impact (especially as concerns TV) (Sect. 1.2). Third, it does not require prior literacy; this a strong advantage given the high rate of illiteracy in Morocco (Sect. 1.2). After the presentation and assessment of the existing electronic media in both Morocco and Algeria, a tentative proposal was made. It suggested two plans. One is a conservative plan consisting in suggesting some improvements to the existing Radio and TV programmes in order to make them capable of playing a role in Tamazight maintenance programmes. The other is a more affirmativeplan geared towards having the Imazighen appropriate the State - funded media for themselves, as it is done elsewhere, and use them for both entertainment and language maintenance.

One sine qua non condition for the success of either maintenance plans requires that the State lift the 44 year siege on Tamazight and fully support its revitalisation and maintenance. Another equally sine qua non condition demands that the Imazighen rise up to the occasion and act responsibly so as not to dash the hopes raised by the King's decision to create the "Royal Institute for Amazigh Culture". If these efforts fail, and we all hope that they do not, we may expect to see Tamazight (under the name Berber) on the list of the endangered languages of Africa, in two generations' time.

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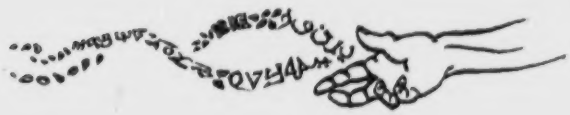

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Self-Help:

Grass-Roots Solutions for Small Languages

Language in the Media Environment of the Florida Seminole

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Abstract

The Seminoles of south Florida have two endangered heritage languages, Creek and Mikasuki. Naturally, the vibrant ambient media environment in English (and Spanish, to some extent) constitute a threatening temptation away from the Seminoles' heritage languages. However, the Seminole Tribe of Florida's own media resources are potential tools with which the Tribe could support and possibly revive its two languages. This report sketches the situation and prospects for action, concentrating on the Seminole Tribe and on the Creek language, spoken principally at the Brighton reservation.

Tribes and Reservations

For most of the 20th century, there were four principle settlement areas of Native Americans in south Florida, and these have become the principal reservations. In 1957, residents of Brighton, Big Cypress, and Dania (now Hollywood) joined to form the federally recognized Seminole Tribe of Florida. In 1962, most Tamiami Trail residents formed the federally recognized Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida. Some Trail residents refused to join either Tribe, and constituted a coherent but informally (or traditionally) organized group of independent Miccosukees. Both Tribes have acquired further reservation land since their foundings, most notably the Seminole Tribe at Immokalee, Tampa, and Fort Pierce.

Hollywood (formerly Dania) is in the city of Hollywood, in coastal Broward County. It was originally in the undeveloped or agricultural hinterlands of Broward, but as the population boomed in the 1960s and '70s, the reservation was completely surrounded by development, and it now functions as one unique neighborhood in the suburban sprawl of the Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood metropolitan area.

Big Cypress is about 30 miles south of Lake Okeechobee and about 50 miles from either central Fort Lauderdale or the Hollywood reservation, both being about an hour away by car via Interstate 75. The reservation is rural in character, and encompasses part of the undeveloped natural area to the south and east, and part of the orange groves and cattle pastures to the north.

Brighton is immediately northwest of Lake, midway between the towns of Okeechobee and Moore Haven, each about 20 minutes away by car. Fort Pierce is about an hour away, while Big Cypress, Fort Myers, and Palm Beach and the rest of the Gold Coast take an hour and a half or more by car, so Brighton is fairly isolated, both from other Seminoles, and from Florida's urban coasts. The reservation is rural and agricultural, with cattle and aquaculture being the principal industries.

"(The) Trail" takes its name from Tamiami Trail (US Highway 41), which was opened across the Everglades from Tampa to Miami in 1928. The main settlement is about 40 miles west of downtown Miami, but small villages are common through the middle third of the one hundred plus mile stretch between Miami and Naples. The landscape is undeveloped and natural, with cultural and outdoor ecological tourism the main enterprise.

Tampa, Fort Pierce, and Immokalee are smaller reservations in both area and population. Tampa and Fort Pierce are part of developed coastal Florida, with settings similar to that of Hollywood. (The Fort Pierce community only recently bought the land for a reservation, which is as yet vacant and undeveloped.) Immokalee is a small farming town, about half an hour inland by car from either Fort Myers or Naples, with citrus and winter vegetables the main crops. It is the main point of contact of Mikasuki with Spanish, through the relationships between Seminoles and the large population of Latin American agricultural workers.

While individual Seminoles work in agriculture, in local business, or with the Tribe, the recent decades' economic success of the Tribe as a whole was driven first by tax-free tobacco sales at Hollywood, then by bingo, and finally by gambling. The Seminole Tribe has casinos on the Hollywood reservation and in nearby Coconut Creek, and on the Big Cypress, Brighton, Immokalee and Tampa reservations. The Miccosukee Tribe has recently opened a casino and resort near Miami.

An article in the *Seminole Tribune* (McDonald, 2001) indicates registered members of the Seminole Tribe recently numbered 2733, with 1018 reservation residents eligible to vote in Tribal elections. US Census 2000 preliminary tallies of 538 Seminoles at Hollywood, 142 at Immokalee, and 449 at Brighton, are considered reliable estimates by Tribal officials. They dispute other Census figures, and estimate 600-700 members at Big Cypress, 32 at Tampa, and 70 in the Fort Pierce community. Miccosukees are estimated to number around 600. Whites, mixed-bloods, and members of other tribes also reside on the reservations and participate in their society, so total reservation population is greater than the registered population by some 20 - 30%. Population

tallies do not of course represent numbers of heritage language speakers, which are certainly much lower.

Languages

Mikasuki

Mikasuki is the heritage language at all the reservations except Brighton. Indian removal in the 19th century seems to have taken a few speakers of Mikasuki (or Hitchiti, a related dialect) to Oklahoma, but it has since disappeared there. The population of both the Seminole and Miccosukee tribes is growing, and there are children in both tribes learning Mikasuki naturally, at home in their families. It is also part of the program at the Ahfachkee School in Big Cypress. However, not all the children of Mikasuki heritage learn it, and it is likely that those who do are actually growing up bilingual, with native command of Mikasuki and English (and occasionally of Spanish as well). Most Mikasuki speakers are fluent and literate in English, and all are able to communicate in it, except possibly a few Trail elders. Mikasuki seems to be at stage 5 or 6 of Fishman's Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS; Fishman, 1991).

The orthographic system for Mikasuki dates from the 1960s. It is derived from standard American English orthography, with addition of a barred 'l' to represent the bilateral fricative. There is no dictionary and little scholarly literature on the language, and pedagogical works on it are presently limited to a few pamphlets. There are no long texts or other reading materials written in Mikasuki, so few are trained in the orthography. Written Mikasuki is most often encountered as isolated words or phrases, often with English glosses, in "display" contexts that are principally in English, such as museum exhibits and announcements in the *Seminole Tribune*.

Creek

Creek (also termed Maskoke or Mvskoke in traditional orthography, Muskogee or similar spellings in English) is the heritage language of the Brighton reservation, and also for some families at Hollywood who have relocated there from Brighton. All Brighton residents speak fluent English, and nearly all are fully literate, including the elders. Many of the elders are trilingual, having spent enough time with other Seminoles further south to learn Mikasuki.

Informal surveys indicate that there remain possibly 100, and certainly fewer than 150, speakers of (Florida) Creek known to the Brighton community. All Brighton Seminoles above the age of about 55 speak fluent Creek. Those younger than about age 20 neither speak nor understand it. Between those ages, there are varying levels of passive or receptive fluency: they understand it when spoken to, but generally cannot respond back in Creek. The youngest fluent speakers are in their mid-40s. Florida Creek is at stage 7, or possibly 6, of Fishman's GIDS (1991), and is therefore moribund.

Creek is also spoken by the Creeks and Seminoles of Oklahoma. Unfortunately, reports indicate that while there are more speakers there, they are even older and they are more dispersed, so Oklahoma Creek is apparently also moribund, and in worse condition than Florida Creek.

The traditional orthography of Creek dates from the mid-1800s, and was developed after the Indian Removals by missionary linguists in Oklahoma. It shows influences from continental orthographies in the graphemes for the vowels, and uses the otherwise disused 'r' for the bilateral fricative. There are substantial numbers of texts from that period through the mid 20th century, including literature, legal documents, personal letters, a dictionary, and a New Testament plus selected Old Testament books. Modern scholarly work on Creek took root in the 1930s with Mary Haas, and has persisted continually since then, culminating most recently with Martin and Mauldin's *Dictionary of Creek/Muskogee*. Furthermore, Jack Martin is at work on a reference grammar. Since the early 1990s, Margaret Mauldin has been teaching Creek at the University of Oklahoma, and has developed pedagogical materials for the language.

Unfortunately, none of the written material, and little of the linguistic scholarship, relates to the Florida Seminoles or the somewhat different Creek dialect that they speak. Until recent years, the Brighton community was either unaware of or disinclined to use the Oklahoma traditional orthography, so they have written Creek by adapting English orthography as best they could. Written Creek has rarely been needed in Florida, in any case, since the community is literate in English and close enough that most Creek communication can be done orally.

Recent Developments

Within the past several years new circumstances have arisen that could affect the situation of the two Florida Seminole languages. First, awareness has been building in the Tribes that language erosion and loss are a potential problem, so committees have been formed at the Seminole Tribe's reservations to discuss the problem. These committees have taken various actions, including: promoting inclusion of Seminole language materials in preschool and primary school for Tribal children, contracting with linguistic consultants for pedagogical materials, and deliberating on standardization of usage, vocabulary, and spelling.

Second, the State of Florida opened Florida Gulf Coast University in Fort Myers, with the Brighton reservation's Glades County location as part of its assigned service area. Susan Stans, an anthropologist with experience in the Brighton community, is a member of the FGCU faculty, and has worked to strengthen ties between the Seminoles and FGCU, by encouraging Tribal members to enroll, by organizing joint activities to support the culture and languages, and by promoting relevant scholarly activities to members of both the Tribal and university communities.

Third, Jack Martin, of William and Mary, the leading scholar of the Creek language, has begun efforts to study and support the languages in Florida. This past summer, with the blessing of the Tribe and indispensable help from Margaret Mauldin of the University of Oklahoma, he organized and ran a two week Creek workshop in

Brighton. Topics included basic grammar, creative writing, development of children's teaching materials, and the first formal Creek literacy training ever done at Brighton.

Activities such as these provide some hope for the continued survival of Creek.

Ambient Media Environment

Peninsular Florida south of Orlando can be thought of as comprised of two socio-cultural systems: the developed urban and suburban areas on Atlantic and Gulf coasts, and the undeveloped natural or agricultural areas of the interior.

On the Atlantic, the Gold Coast, from north of Palm Beach to south of Miami, has in the past 50 years become a teeming unbroken multicultural megalopolis. On the Gulf of Mexico, the Tampa Bay area has followed a similar pattern. As these areas have become crowded, smaller cities have grown as alternatives: Fort Pierce on the Atlantic, Sarasota, Fort Myers, and Naples on the Gulf. The coastal population boom has brought all the sprawl and material culture modern America is known for, but it has also resulted in extraordinary cultural and media richness.

Coastal communities have a variety of local broadcast television stations, as well as the typical national cable and satellite offerings, and have scores of movie screens. They are served by a substantial daily newspaper, sometimes two, and have well stocked chain bookstores. They have numerous radio stations with talk from a spectrum of viewpoints and music from a gamut of styles. They are close enough to enjoy major concert venues, professional theaters, and a professional symphony orchestra. Their local shopping mall has stores selling music and videos, and stores for the equipment to play it, and every neighborhood has rental videos.

Miami is known for its Cuban émigré population, but now those of Cuban heritage make up less than half of the area's Hispanics. So many have arrived from elsewhere in Central and South America that Miami is sometimes called the Capital of Latin America. The *Miami Herald* serves that community through *El Nuevo Herald*, a Spanish language daily. Moreover, Haitian Creole and other island vernaculars are commonly heard on both coasts, and even Fort Myers has radio stations broadcasting in both Spanish and Haitian.

By contrast with the coasts, the rural interior attracts fewer and less diverse cultural and media concerns, simply because of the smaller population. For instance, the phone directory for the area west of Lake Okeechobee, which covers three regionally significant towns and the Brighton reservation, lists no local TV station, no chain bookstore, a single non-multiplex movie theater, two record shops, and only eight radio stations. Residents in the interior are not completely isolated, since they are served by cable and satellite TV, video rentals, radio from both coasts, and public libraries. They do, however, have to make an extra effort to benefit from the cultural and media environment that coastal residents take for granted.

The effect of this cultural dichotomy on the Seminoles depends on the location of the reservation. Hollywood, Tampa, and Fort Pierce are clearly within the coastal cultural zone. Big Cypress is far enough from the coast to be rural, but is closely linked to Hollywood by social and familial ties, and has benefited since the 1980s from the transportation link provided by Interstate 75, so it seems to get the best of both worlds. Immokalee and the Trail are in a rather similar situation, since they are in rural settings, but close enough to developed coasts to profit from their opportunities if so desired. Brighton is on the midline of the peninsula, away from any interstate highways, an hour from the closest coastal community and even further from the nearest reservation, Big Cypress. Brighton must be considered isolated.

Seminole Media

The Seminole Tribe owns and controls two media outlets, the *Seminole Tribune* and Seminole Broadcasting. There are also other kinds of media-related material which are associated with Seminole culture.

The Seminole Tribune

The *Seminole Tribune* (*ST*) is a full (American) format newspaper published by and for the Seminole Tribe of Florida. It is generally published every two weeks, although administrative and other situations sometimes cause delays of one or two weeks. Recent issues have been from eight to twenty pages, with sixteen pages being usual, and print runs are around 5000 copies. Circulation includes all registered members of the Seminole Tribe, paid subscribers around Florida and the US (plus a few in Europe), vending machines at the Tribe's museums and other businesses (Billie Swamp Safari, casinos, etc.), exchanges with other members of the Native American Journalism Association, and government officials, including all members of the Florida state legislature. (*ST* is included in *Ethnic NewsWatch*, a digital database available in many research libraries.) *ST* was founded in the 1960s by Betty Mae Jumper, at the time a vigorous leader among her people, and she is still involved with the paper as a respected elder.

The content of the *ST* covers a broad range of material. Recent general news stories have reported on miscounts of Seminoles in the 2000 census, Seminole descendants discovered in the Bahamas, ancient dugout canoes revealed by drought in north Florida, a tribal member's recovery since a kidney transplant, and then-Chief James Billie's loss of a finger in an alligator wrestling demonstration. Meetings, actions, and elections concerning the Tribe's governmental and corporate bodies are always covered, as are developments touching the Tribe's business interests, such as cattle ranching, citrus groves, and casinos. Features have included reports on various pow-wows and festivals, remembrances of Seminoles and friends from history, and a series on the forts in the Seminole Wars. Sports for both sexes are covered, from national and regional organized competition to local participant sports, with rodeo, basketball, bowling and fishing garnering the most print. Education news is reported, whether involving policy issues touching the Tribe, programs presenting opportunities to Tribal members, events such as Tribal Preschool graduations, or individual milestones

such as professional licenses or college degrees. Health and fitness features are frequent, often on the subjects of diabetes, weight problems, addictions, and infant health. Announcements and classifieds round out the paper. Naturally, paid advertisements from businesses serving the reservations have a prominent place in the *ST*.

The *ST* is essentially an English language newspaper. Greetings and thanks in Mikasuki, or more rarely Creek, often open and close those texts which directly address Tribal readers. Recently, Editor Virginia Mitchell has included a photo in each issue which is captioned in Mikasuki and glossed in English. She is in favor of increased use of both Mikasuki and Creek in the *ST*, but there is no explicit plan for that increase, nor any continuing feature designed to encourage or support language usage in the Tribe.

Seminole Broadcasting

Seminole Broadcasting consists of production facilities and materiel at Brighton, Big Cypress, and Hollywood, plus a dedicated channel on the reservations' cable TV systems. The following description pertains to the Brighton Reservation.

The cable network is accessible to about half the area of the Brighton reservation, but that area includes the majority of the homes there. The cable currently delivers CBS, NBC, ABC, CNN, TNT, TNN, ESPN, HBO, A&E, Discovery, Showtime, Disney, and Brighton's local access Seminole Broadcasting channel, WSBC. There is capacity for three more channels. Brighton residents have recently tended to forgo cable in favor of various satellite TV options, which offer an enormous increase in program variety (with ten or more times the channels) at a competitive price. These residents can still view WSBC if they wish at Tribal buildings which retain cable service.

WSBC's informal programming plan provides for broadcasting of meetings on Monday, sports on Tuesday, Native News (a nationally syndicated program), movies, and pageants on Wednesday, rodeo and 4H on Thursday, and community events on Friday. These programs are scheduled to be on the air throughout the business day and into the evenings. Both the guidelines and the schedule are adaptable to the circumstances of the moment and the judgment of broadcasting personnel. Weekend fare tends toward movies, and lasts longer into the night. WSBC, like cable service as a whole, continues around the clock all week, but is unsupervised overnight. When unsupervised, WSBC broadcasts a continuous loop of announcements requested by the Tribe or Brighton community members.

The programs WSBC broadcasts basically come from their tape library. The library contains over 1300 tapes, some of which, such as Native News, movies, sports, and fitness tapes, were apparently commercially acquired. Many, probably the majority, were produced by Seminole Broadcasting over the years since its founding in 1995. These are duplicated and shared among the reservations. Titles in the tape library include "Traditional Turtle Cleaning with Willie Johns," "B. C. [Big Cypress] Cattle & Range Building Dedication," "Fire on the Swamp w/ Joe Diffie" (a tape of a Tribe sponsored concert), "Council Meeting 3/08/01," "Fry Bread & Pumpkin Bread 1 Demo," "Senior Fitnessize," "Brighton 4H Steer & Swine Sale," "Getting to Know Mitchell Cypress," and "All About Pengions [sic]."

At Brighton, the Seminole Broadcasting installation is in a doublewide modular building which houses the cable control facility and related equipment, the tape library, desks and PCs for administrators and staff, storage, and rooms which could be outfitted as studios. It is equipped with high quality portable video cameras and related materiel. Staffers routinely take these cameras on location to various Tribal functions (festivals, school functions, meetings, etc.) to make recordings chronicling the life of the tribe. (If the location is special or distant, the Tribe sends elders along for an outing, as when a girls basketball team recently went to a regional competition in Alabama.) Culture officials for the Tribe also enlist broadcast personnel to record their cultural programs when appropriate.

There is no specific language policy for material that Seminole Broadcasting records or broadcasts. As chroniclers, the broadcasting staff simply record what occurs naturally at the event or in the program. Meetings, for instance, are mostly in English, though an elder will occasionally stand to make a statement in Mikasuki or Creek. Cultural tapes seemingly follow the pattern of Willie Johns' turtle tutorial; he recalls making it basically in English, with parenthetical explanations of relevant Creek terms. Parts of Jack Martin's recent Creek workshop, mentioned above, were taped, and there are tapes of Mikasuki lessons recorded by a Big Cypress resident. It seems there are few tapes, if any, which are entirely in one of the Seminoles' heritage languages, or basically so with brief English explanations.

Other Media

Three other language based phenomena can be considered Seminole media: books, music, and a web site.

All three of the Seminole Tribe's reservations have libraries, open to all Tribe members, which are fairly well stocked with works related to Seminole history and culture. These include works ranging from the scholarly, such as Wright's *Creeks and Seminoles* (1986), through more readable treatments, such as Weisman's *Unconquered People* (1999), down to works oriented toward children. Those Seminoles with a bookish bent are aware of such works, but few, if any, of them are by Seminoles, with two notable exceptions. First, Betty Mae Jumper, the above-mentioned founder of the Seminole Tribune, and Chairwoman (Chief) of the Tribe during the period of 1967-71, composed a selection of traditional stories and published it in 1994 as *Legends of the Seminoles*. A short, large format book, it is beautifully illustrated by Guy LaBree, a white artist who had Seminole friends while growing up near the Dania reservation. The legends and the associated material are a stylish window into a small part of Seminole culture, but as regards the languages, there are only a few Mikasuki words cited. Second, this year saw the publication of *Healing Plants,*

Medicine of the Florida Seminole Indians, by Alice Micco Snow and her co-author, Susan Stans. Alice Snow is a respected Brighton elder and traditional herbalist, and is fluent in English and Mikasuki as well as her native Creek. The book documents a variety of topics relating to Snow's upbringing as a person and as an herbalist, about the ways of medicine in Seminole culture, and about the integration of modern medical practices among the Seminoles (and of traditional and herbal medicines in Western cultures). The core of the book, though, comes from Snow's drive to document for future Seminoles the specifics of their traditional herbal remedies, including the correct names for the relevant plants in both Creek and Mikasuki. As a result, *Healing Plants* is an important work for anthropology, ethnobotany, and comparative Muskogean linguistics, as well as for the Seminoles it was meant to serve.

James Billie, who recently left his longtime position as Chairman of the Seminole Tribe, has a country rock band and several CDs on the market. His songs are generally on Seminole themes and often include passages in Mikasuki, his native language. One teaches counting in Mikasuki, and another, "Big Alligator," alternates lines in English and Mikasuki. *Southern Exposure* is a recent CD by Tiger Tiger, a Miccosukee rock band. There are other singers and groups who are either Seminoles or their friends, and who sing of Florida and Seminole themes.

The Seminole Tribe has a well designed web site, www.seminoletribe.com. The principal links lead to pages with copious information about: History, Culture, Tourism/Enterprises, Government, Services, Seminole Tribune, Marketplace, and Follow Our Trail (archives). There are other links to Seminole FAQS and to pages about specific Tribal businesses, recent festivals or other newsworthy events, Betty Mae Jumper's site and former Chief Jim Billie's CDs, and a children's study guide for teachers. Most of these seem to be aimed at a non-Tribal audience, but there are also links to a calendar and to Tribal employment, which mainly concern Tribe members. Most members probably do not have Internet access with a home computer, but the Tribal buildings do, so any member can have Internet access via the reservation library.

Prospects

The Creek language is moribund, and the Mikasuki language could quickly become so. If either is to survive into the next century, the Seminoles must commit to a long term vigorous effort to support and expand the use of the two languages in a wide variety of contexts. No-one who is aware of the current pace of language shift and death will be sanguine about this prospect.

Still, the Seminole Tribe currently possesses two, and potentially three, powerful tools for encouraging use of the languages. First, the *Seminole Tribune* stands ready to print any kind of language material that the Tribe members either provide or request. Second, Seminole Broadcasting has as part of its mission and regular duties to record and broadcast cultural programs for the Tribe, and language is clearly an integral part of that culture. Third, the Internet and associated digital technologies provide the capacity for the Tribe and its members to compose and distribute long texts — the functional equivalent of book publishing, with the bonus option of supplemental audio and video, all of which could be received by any member via affordable computer equipment.

One project that could be fairly quickly initiated would be the publishing in the *Seminole Tribune* of a continuing feature based on historic Creek texts from Oklahoma. They would need some accompanying commentary in English to explain the context and any unusual words or structures, but the texts could be Bible verses, serialized stories, or letters from out of the past, for instance. This would capitalize on the literacy training from the Creek workshop this past summer. It would also provide to the Seminoles, Mikasuki speakers included, an example of a written Indian language in use, and could encourage training in the orthography, and eventually its actual use.

A more difficult, but forward-looking and potentially rewarding project would be to use computer technology to create pedagogical materials for the two languages. The tribe has already arranged for an outside contractor to produce such materials for Mikasuki, but the process is long, slow, expensive, and uncertain to be effective. For Creek, Susan Stans' FGCU classes have produced some small but interesting materials through collaboration between students and Brighton residents. Projects with Margaret Mauldin at the University of Oklahoma could be explored, as could ways to integrate pedagogy with Jack Martin's Creek Language Archive at www.wm.edu/linguistics/creek/.

Seminole Broadcasting and volunteers could be enlisted to record a new series of cultural videos entirely in the heritage languages. This would have the advantage of involving both languages on equal footing, would provide more culturally relevant material for cable broadcast on WSBC, and would help viewers by engaging the crucial auditory-oral channel which is the natural mode of language acquisition. Also, since videos do not engage orthographic standards, they would require less formal review and approval.

One final suggestion, videos or computer materials could be planned or adapted for use in either recreational or educational programs organized by the Tribe, from preschool on up. Children could potentially be engaged by such materials in Creek or Mikasuki, provided they deal at an appropriate level with an absorbing topic, such as games, animals, or simple crafts. Stickball, rodeo, and basic beadwork, for instance, could all be treated in ways attractive to the children, whose involvement is crucial to maintaining the Seminole heritage languages.

Acknowledgements

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Indigenous Presence In The Nicaraguan Media: The Mayangna.

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Abstract

This paper addresses the attempts by the Mayangna people of Nicaragua to create an indigenous mass media communication space in the two modalities that are available in the region: broadcasting and the written press.

The paper is divided into two major parts: one devoted to the broadcasting efforts in Mayangna; and one devoted to the written press using Mayangna. Given that Mayangna is an oral culture by tradition, it is no surprise that despite being more recent, the broadcasting efforts are being much more successful (in terms of audience response) than the written press efforts.

Some Background

The Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua, the Eastern half of the country, is home to some 7 indigenous and ethnic groups: the Miskitu, the Sumu (Mayangna and Ulwa), the Creole, the Garifuna, the Rama, and the Spanish-speaking mestizo population. The Mayangna people of Nicaragua, which count with some 10,000plus people, live in its Northern Atlantic Coast region, along the banks of the Wangki (Coco) River and its tributaries (Waspuk, Bocay; Bambana, Wawa). There are two dialectal variants in Nicaragua: the majority Panamahka and the minority Tuahka; a third group lives in Honduras, along the Patuca River (see map at the end of the paper). The bulk of Mayangna communities in Nicaragua depend administratively from two mestizo Spanish-speaking towns: Bonanza and Rosita. These two towns, together with Siuna, form what is known as the Mining Triangle. Originally, a center for the mining industry, its activity is now reduced to Bonanza. Bonanza is also the head for the majority of Mayangna communities, including Musawas, its cultural capital. Rosita is the head for a smaller number of communities, which crucially include Wasakin, the main community for the Tuahka minority. The office for PEBI, the Bilingual Intercultural Program, dependent from the Ministry of Education, can also be found in Rosita. The PEBI program for primary school operates since 1985. Rosita also counts with an extension of URACCAN University Siuna campus.

Several organizations operate in the region, in the area of bilingual intercultural education. They include, among others, Terra Nuova (the Italian cooperation), Kepa (the Finnish cooperation), IBIS (Danish cooperation), URACCAN (the University of the Atlantic Region of the Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua) and the Ministry of Education, all of which, under specific funding projects, have joined into a group called *Coro* with the common goal of coordinating the various activities related to bilingual intercultural education taking place in the region.

Broadcasting Programs

This is a relatively new effort in the history of the media in indigenous language in the region. Though there were some antecedents during the Revolution times (e.g., *La Costa Atlántica, Presente*), the Mayangna had been without a voice for a considerable time.

Due probably to the oral character of this culture, the broadcasting programs have been having a high degree of response and acceptance on the part of the Mayangna population.

The Origins of an Idea

The idea for a radio program integrally done in Mayangna came up around 1998 out of conversations between Eloy Frank, then a member of the Bilingual Education Program and now the Coordinator for URACCAN's IPILC, the Linguistic and Cultural Research Institute in Rosita, and the late Fernando Espinoza, director of Radio Rosita and Coordinator for the Rosita extension campus of URACCAN.

The first pilot attempt was a 15 min daily space for a period of one month, during which some 30 teachers of the Bilingual Program were concentrated in Rosita for a module of the Bachelor's Degree for Bilingual and Intercultural Education sponsored by URACCAN.
During that month, teachers took turns in telling stories, informing about the activities of the BA Program or simply giving news relevant to the Mayangna population. The success of this pilot was such that it was decided to look for more permanent funding and a more extended air time. A proposal was then written for a one hour daily program during a three year period, and submitted to URACCAN.

Sponsors and Funding

URACCAN sponsored the project with funds from the Sahwang and the Foreibca projects. Sahwang is a project of the *Consorcio* formed by Terra Nuova, KEPA and IBIS with funds from the European Union to give support to bilingual intercultural education. Foreibca is a program of Finland to strengthen the bilingual intercultural education system. Both operate in the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua. These two programs are members of the *Coro* group, mentioned above, which coordinates the activities on bilingual education in the area.

The funding goes to pay for the overhead to the radio stations that broadcast the shows.

The Programs, The Actors and The Public

Two radio shows were designed, one in Rosita and one in Bonanza. This arrangement, for all intents and purposes, gives coverage to practically all the Mayangna-speaking territory.

Rosita is one of the three mining towns in the so-called Mining Triangle in the Northern Atlantic Coast Region (RAAN) of Nicaragua. Although its population is mostly mestizo and Spanish-speaking, it is also the municipal head for a group of Mayangna communities (including the Tuahka minority) and, most importantly, it is the seat for the offices of the PEBI, the Bilingual Education Program, a section of the Ministry of Education. As we said, it also houses one of the extensions of the Mining Triangle Campus of URACCAN, where the meetings for the B.A. on Bilingual Education (Mayangna) regularly take place; this campus is also the host to Radio Rosita, a radio station sponsored by URACCAN and the only one in the area.

Radio Rosita operates at 94.1 FM and is a community radio, which means that it is a not-for-profit insitution, whose goal it is to serve the information needs of the general population in its range. Though Radio Rosita is sponsored by URACCAN, its goal is to be self-sufficient, that is, it should generate enough income to pay electricity and general equipment maintenance bills. One of its income sources is to rent air time to anyone who wants to have a radio show. This is the arrangement with the Mayangna radio program.

The Mayangna radio show, *Ma Yalahda Lâni Kat Sins Lâni Dahdi Mawi* or 'Rescuing Our Identity And Sowing Wisdom,' began in March 2001. It airs during one hour every day, at 1pm, after the daily news, and is fully in Mayangna. It reaches 8 Mayangna communities, with a total population of some 2000 inhabitants. Having a small, battery operated radio receiver is a common fixture in Mayangna households nowadays, so we can safely assume that the program reaches all the Mayangna-speaking population of the area.

The show is conducted by Pulinario Sebastián, originally from Musawas but now residing in Rosita. His experience on radio goes back to the 80's when he worked for Radio Sandino on *La Costa Atlántica, Presente*, which provided a space for indigenous people's issues, such as personal and land rights, cultural claims, etc...

Bonanza is the only of the three mining towns in the area with a still active mine. Like Rosita, it is a predominantly mestizo Spanish-speaking town, though it is the municipal head for the main and biggest Mayangna territory, *Mayangna Sauni As*. Bonanza's mayor is today a Mayangna.

Unlike Rosita, Bonanza has two radio stations: Radio Bonanza and Radio Estereo Pis-Pis. First thing that needed to be done was to determine which one of those two radio stations had the most coverage in Mayangna territory, so a study was performed. The result was that Radio Stereo Pis-Pis had the most coverage, reaching up until the community of Sikilta. Thus, Radio Stereo Pis-Pis was chosen for the Mayangna program in the Bonanza area.

Radio Estereo Pis-Pis (whose name derives from the local river, Río Pis-Pis) is, unlike Radio Rosita, a private radio station which belongs to the local cable TV system (which receives via satellite and distributes locally via cable).

The Mayangna program, under the same name as theone in Rosita, initiated in June 2001 and it also airs one hour daily at 2pm. It reaches 16 different Mayangna communities with a total population of some 7000-plus inhabitants. The show is conducted by Simón Avelino, a local primary school bilingual teacher in Sakalwas, the closest Mayangna community, a mere 10 min (by car; 1 hour on foot) from Bonanza.

The third element in this as in any other play is the audience, the public. Both programs are open to the public's participation, though the logistics of the area determine the final degree of participation. There are no phone lines in the communities, so people cannot call in, although Mayangnas residing in either Rosita or Bonanza can and do. Also, people travelling away from their homes can just drop by and speak in the radio; personal messages, opinions and greetings are usual fare at the station and as much part of the regular programming as the more regularly scheduled activities (see below).

This has lead in some occasions to very fruitful interactions. An example of it is the participation of an elderly woman from a community called Brikput. She heard a brief comment on the foundation of her community on the radio. Afterwards, during a field trip by Eloy Frank to the community, she talked to him to set the story right: her father had been the founder of the community and she was the only one left to remember the events. She told her story to Eloy Frank who taped and transcribed it. The story was later told in the radio and so, a part of theMayangna oral tradition which was at risk of being lost was recovered and, again orally, re-transmitted to the new generations in the communities.

Programming: Methodology and Content

The content of the program is varied. Both conductors of the program, in collaboration with IPILC's Coordinator Eloy Frank, elaborate a monthly and weekly 'plan of work' a copy of which is sent to the sponsors.

The subjects that are treated include, but are not restricted to:

Support to the Bilingual Education Program. This includes educational programs for the general population to raise their awareness towards the needs of a bilingual, intercultural education for both children and adults. Since general attitudes of the surrounding cultures (both Spanish-speaking and other indigenous groups) still retain negatives stereotypes about the Mayangna and their language (stereotypes that have been in good part assimilated by the Mayangna themselves), this awareness programs are crucial for the success of a bilingual,

intercultural education system and its acceptance on the part of the Mayangna population.

Another way in which the radio show supports PEBI is by transmitting pedagogical orientations to the teachers of the PEBI program residing in far away communities. This is done by the technical personnel of PEBI in Rosita.

Mayangna history and culture. This is definitely one of the highlights of the show. A great emphasis has been devoted to recovering all the oral traditions, all the epic history about their origins, from the elders, and at the same time to re-transmitting, to re-activating the life of those (hi)stories.

A frequent topic of conversation in the program is the House of Culture in Sakalwas, a multi-function space that serves the purpose of meeting place and museum, housing some traditional artifacts and crafts. Frequent discussions also center around how to preserve and maintain alive those traditions that are being forgotten now.

A good example of the interest and interaction of the general public in this endeavor is the case of the elderly woman from Brikput that we mentioned before.

Nature conservancy has been one of the major concerns of the Mayangna population, especially in view of the damage caused to the forests by timber companies and by the pressure of new mestizo colonization into traditionally indigenous lands.

This, of course, is directly related to issues of ownership of the land by the indigenous communities. The 'biosfera BOSAWAS' is an area declared natural reserve, whose status (who has control over it, the central state or the Mayangna?) is still under national debate.

Support to educational activities. Whenever there is a project to produce educational materials, the radio offers its one hour space to facilitate the communication between the different researchers in the field. Such was the case recently with the production of a book on reconstructing the oral history for recent (1980-2000) events, especially those related to the Contra war, which directly affected the lives of the Mayangna communities.

Mayangna music production is, unfortunately, not well documented. An effort is currently underway to obtain more recordings of traditional music. In the meanwhile, however, their choice of modern music is a plus for the local Spanish-speaking population of Rosita, who claim they listen to the program, though they do not understand a word of what they are saying, just for the music.

Audience participation is a big part of the content of the program. We have already said that there are no phone lines for people in the communities to participate directly. However, the radio has proven very useful in transmitting long-distance messages from the mestizo town to the far away communities (Musawas, for instance, is 7 hours on foot away from Bonanza, or 11 hours by boat). These messages may be personal or can also be calls for meetings or activities, or changes in dates or times for such activities.

Supporting Materials

The materials used to prepare the contents of the program range from compilations of traditional oral (hi)stories to guidelines for nature conservancy.

Among the texts that have been used are: a collection of traditional recipes (*Di kuruhna*, by Melba McClean and Maruska Kokrhanek), a collection of traditional oral stories (*Un Sumu en otro Planeta*, by Melba McLean), a collection of women's life stories (*Mayangna Yayal Sangninaka Yulni*), a collection of guidelines for ecological management of the land (*Normas Ecológicas en los Territorios Indígenas Mayangna*), etc...

The Training of Human Resources

One of the major concerns at present is the training of personnel. That is why URACCAN (University for the Autonomous Region of the Nicaraguan Caribbean Coast) has organized a *Diplomado* degree on Social Communication. Given the logistics of the area, this degree is to be organized around *encuentros*, intensive 'meetings' taking place Thursday through Sunday for 6 months.

This degree is geared towards training local people from the Mining Triangle, including personnel from Radio Bonanza and Radio Pispis. It is hoped that at least 4 positions may be occupied by Mayangna people, and that the proportion between women and men be equally balanced.

Written Press

There have been several attempts at creating media coverage written in Mayangna (see below). However, the main issue is that Mayangna culture is an oral one and as such the written media is not a familiar one. Only children and teachers read and even so, it is not the preferred medium.

Nevertheless, several attempts have been made at filling the written media gap. We can classify the written media in Mayangna according to the percentage of Mayangna language used in it. Basically we can distinguish between: (a) *bilingual* publications, that is, those in which every article and piece is written in Mayangna with a translation in Spanish; and (b) *testimonial* or pseudo-multilingual publications, that is, those that are mainly written in Spanish but geared towards the Coast population and, thus, in an attempt to reflect the multilingual reality of the region, include small pieces in some of the other languages of the area. No publication exists that is fully and only written in Mayangna, though some such compilations of oral traditions exist.

In what follows we will examine the publications in those two modalities: bilingual and testimonial.

Bilingual Publications

Dikutna This short-lived monthly publication appeared during 1999. The goal of this magazine was the dissemination of Mayangna culture. Its articles contained

radio broadcast programs as supporting materials. The editorial staff was totally integrated by Mayangnas.

Testimonial Publications

Autonomía This is the only publication in newspaper format. It appears once a month and includes the usual political news and opinion articles.

Its articles are mainly published in Spanish with the occasional Miskitu article (the most spread indigenous language of the Coast) and the occasional review in Mayangna.

Revista Universitaria del Caribe (URACCAN) This is a biannual publication, whose character is more academic, even though the topics are similar to those treated in *Autonomía* and in *Wani* below. Its last number (vol 4, April 2001) was totally devoted to Mayangna issues. This issue had the special property of being bilingual, that is, all the articles (including the proceedings of the 1st Symposium on Mayangna Bilingual Intercultural Education) appear in Spanish and Mayangna.

Wani is the journal published by CIDCA, the Center for Research and Development of the Atlantic Coast. It has the same general areas of interest as the previous publications, but its articles tend to be highly academic and research oriented. Articles are written in Spanish. An initial section in the journal includes abstracts of all the articles in Spanish, English, Miskitu and Mayangna.

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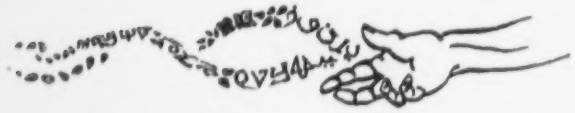
Figure 1: Map of the Mayangna communities in Nicaragua (Tuahka and Panamahka) and in Honduras (Tawahka).



4

New Media:

a Place for Small Languages in Cyberspace

'Promoting the Maintenance of Endangered Languages through the Internet : the Case of Tamazight'

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Abstract

Given the potential contribution that the media and Information Technology can make to an effective maintenance of endangered languages and the assumption that the availability of such media is likely to support the people concerned in their attempts to work towards the survival of these languages, this paper aims at demonstrating the value of using the Internet as a means of promoting the maintenance of endangered languages, with special reference to Tamazight. This aim will be achieved through an assessment of the present situation of Tamazight on the Internet and the extent to which its presence on the Web contributes to the achievement of some of the aims of organisations and individuals whose concern is the maintenance of endangered languages. A brief survey of the most prominent components of the presence of Tamazight on the Internet will be made, with the aim of assessing the effectiveness of use of Internet facilities for promoting the cause of Tamazight language. Practical suggestions concerning the use of the Internet for purposes of maintaining Tamazight are proposed. Of particular importance in this respect is the design of Tamazight online courses for both native and non-native speakers, the setting up of discussion groups concerned with issues in teaching and learning Tamazight, the provision of printing facilities using the original Tamazight script ('Tifinagh'), and the publication of online newsletters to be devoted to issues in maintaining endangered languages. The paper ends with implications for action.

The effects of globalisation and the development of technology are being felt at all levels of human life, perhaps more particularly at the cultural level where the new technologies may serve as means of desctruction of cultural specificities, just as they may serve as tools that contribute to the preservation and promotion of an essential component of culture, Viz. languages. In this respect, we may assume that information technology, with special reference to the Internet, can effectively contribute to the maintenance and promotion of what are referred to as *'endangered'* languages. The aim of this paper is to demonstrate how the Internet can function as a preserving and promoting device for endangered languages, with special reference to Tamazight, and propose ways by which documentation, preservation and promotion of this language can be achieved. It will conclude with implications for action.

The Internet : A tool for maintaining and promoting endangered languages

The use of the media and information technology in preserving and contributing to the maintenance of endangered languages has been attested in a number of studies concerned with specific languages (see, for example, Aguenaou, 1998; Mensching, 2000; O'Croinin, 2000; Wiens, 2000 and Almasude, 1999). In this respect, the role of the Internet in particular may cover three essential components of the process of rescuing endangered languages from potential death : documentation, preservation and promotion (See FEL 'Aims and Objectives').

1. Documentation and preservation

Given the fact that an endangered language *'presents the additional tragic prospect of a present loss of scientific data'* (Wechsler, 1995), it seems essential that means are made available for recording and storing linguistic data for purposes of systematic description of endangered languages. In this context, the Internet constitutes an ideal technological tool for reversing the process of erosion that may affect endangered languages. The establishment of clearning houses and archives will make available to linguists and other scientists concerned valuable data that will allow them to carry out language descriptions and compile grammars and dictionaries useful for documenting and standardisation purposes. As Woodfield (1995) rightly suggests,

> a *language's existence is secure, provided there exists an authoritative dictionary of its words, plus a description of its phonetics and phonology, plus a reasonably complete account of its syntax, plus rules for assigning meanings to its sentences. (...) Additional facts about [language] X that one would wish to find in an archive include X's position in a scheme of classification of the world's languages, its origin, its historical development, the geographical location of its speakers, and so on.*

A clearing house and archives that contain such information on a language in the process of endangerness constitute a safeguard against the dangers

of attrition, which may be caused by contact with potentially more dominant languages, and the total disappearance of this language. It is also a source of information not only for researchers but also for native and non-native speakers interested in following the historical development of the language and the changes it may have incurred at different stages of this development. The documentary information may be organised in such a way that *'endangerness signals'* (for example, a drastic reduction in the number of native speakers) are incorporated that will alarm parties concerned with the preservation of the language as to the possibility of its endangerness.

The Internet, thus, can provide easy access to valuable data and constitute a forum for exchanging such data for purposes of making it available to both the researcher and the layman. Documentation and systematic description of the endangered language will help people concerned set up a framework for addressing the most urgent issues in preserving and promoting the language.

The preservation of an endangered language is the second item on the agenda of those who feel it is their responsibility to reverse the process of endangerness and assist threatened languages (See FEL *'Aims and objectives'* and Fishman, 1991). Documented information on the endangered language which is stored on the Internet will provide insight into the linguistic, cultural and historical components of a community's heritage and insure the perpetuation of its language and cultural identity. Obviously, such efforts at contributing to the preservation of an endangered language through the Internet will bear fruit only if the people most concerned, Viz. members of the native community, are committed to and involved in this process and have guaranteed access to the World Wide Web. As will be pointed out in the case of Tamazight, the socio-economic situation of communities whose languages are endangered does not always allow them to benefit from access to the Internet, even in parts of the world where it is readily available. This points to an important restriction on the role of technology in general, and the Web in particular as a *'rescue tool of endangered languages'* (Mensching, 2000).

In spite of the potential restrictions on the use of Information and Communications Technology for purposes of documenting and preserving endangered languages, the storing, processing and disseminating facilities provided by the Internet make of it a most valuable tool for contributing to the endeavours of individuals and groups to maintain and revitalise languages in the process of endangerness.

2. Promotion of endangered languages

A prerequisite for promoting the revitalisation and maintenance of endangered languages is, in addition to fully committed people who have at heart the cause of these languages, the existence of an effective network of support technology. This network has been developed for a number of endangered languages as attested by Buszard-Welcher who states that *'the number of Web sites on endangered languages has risen dramatically in the past few years ... [to] more than one could view in a week'*. Although not all endangered languages are equally covered by such sites, we may assume that their promoting function is achieving its goals, particularly in so far as raising awareness about these languages is concerned.

The advertising role of the Internet may extend to at least three groups of people concerned with maintaining endangered languages. The first group are local members of the community of native speakers of the endangered language who, because of internal and external pressures (see, Crawford, 1994), may have opted for a more prestigious language. The promoting role of the Internet here lies in its contribution to lifting the stigmatisation associated with the endangered language among some of its native speakers and actively involving them in the process of maintaining their language. In this way, their motivation will be enhanced and the will to revive their language and culture will *'come from them, for themselves'* (Kraus, 1992, cited in Crawford, op. cit.). This involvement of native speakers is possible only if they have ready access to the technology inherent to the use of the Internet and if they are *'computer literate'*. It so happens that most communities whose languages are endangered are economically vulnerable communities where computer equipment and Internet connection are a rare commodity, when it exists; and where computer literacy is a privilege of the intellectual elite. In this situation, support programmes aimed at making technology available and introducing computer literacy in the communities concerned are the only way to make effective the promotion function of the Internet among local native speakers of endangered languages.

The second group of people who may be affected by this promotion function of the Internet are *'non-local'* native speakers of an endangered language. In fact, *'non-locals'* who constitute diasporas of the communities of endangered languages are the group most likely to react positively and contribute to the Internet promotion endeavours to revive and maintain endangered languages. Because of the availability of computer equipment, the relatively cheap cost of Internet connection and, most importantly, the legally non-restricted availability of information, they are in a position to enhance the role of the Internet as a maintaining and promoting device. In fact, these people live in technologically developed countries where a proliferation of endangered language Web sites has been noted and where activism in favour of these languages and their communities has been widespread. In this context, the Internet may constitute an effective factor of *'community building'* (Buszard-Welcher, op. cit.) at the 'non-local' level, where this group play the important role of providers and organisers of information aiming at raising people's awareness of the endangered situation of

their language and contributing to its revitalisation and promotion.

The third group concerned with lifting the factors of endangerness and working towards a maintenance of endangered languages are agencies and organisations such as the Endangered Language Fund, UNESCO, LSACLEP (Linguistic Society of America Committee on Endangered Languages and their Preservation), etc. which all like the FEL aim at

> *raising awareness of endangered languages', 'support[ing] the use of endangered languages in all contexts', 'support[ing] the documentation of endangered languages' and 'collect[ing] together and mak[ing] available information of use in the preservation of endangered languages.* (FEL, Aims of the Foundation).

The relevance of the work carried out by these organisations to the topic at hand is that they have all developed Web sites which are effectively used to further their aims. Some of them have set up programmes aiming at making available Internet facilities for use by members of endangered language communities.

Moreover, because most endangered languages are not written, the technical facilities afforded by the Web constitute a solution of the problems relating to the lack of writing systems in these languages. The possibility of standardisation of language scripts using special fonts that are readily available to the users is a promoting factor for endangered languages in that it allows the easy preservation of linguistic data and will ideally contribute to the process of codification and standardisation of the endangered language. This, in turn, will facilitate learning and teaching the language in formal contexts as part of literacy programmes.

In addition to the design of Web sites, the revitalisation and promotion function of the Internet is also reflected in storing, processing and disseminating information about the endangered language, the community and its culture, making it available to interested people all over the world. Because *'the destruction of a language is the destruction of a rooted identity'* (Fishman, 1991 : 4), it is essential that awareness about the endangerness of a language is raised among the individuals and groups mentioned above (local natives, non-local natives and other individuals and organisations) so that they all contribute in their own way to countering the threat of death of the language. This is possible if they are all well-informed about the dangers at hand and the ways by which they can face up to the challenge of breathing life into the endangered language and safeguard the cultural identity of the community.

A final way in which the use of the Internet can contribute to the maintenance and promotion of endangered languages is the prestige associated with Information and Communications Technology. In her analysis of the content of native American endangered language Web sites, Buszard-Welcher points out the importance of creative use of technology and the introduction of innovative content which can give a *'cool'* flavour to these sites. She states :

> *For endangered languages, the commotion raised by a cool site can have the important functions of increasing the language's prestige (especially among younger people), and its domains of use.*

Considering the lack of motivation for learning native languages among young people, the *'cool'* touch of endangered language Web sites is likely to enhance the prestige of these languages and effectively contribute to their promotion. This is particularly relevant in the case of young people, for they are the ones who use the Internet most, and they are the ones who are most affected by it!

In conclusion to this first part of the paper, we may say that the Internet, as attested by a number of studies, has contributed and is contributing effectively to the maintenance and revival of endangered languages all over the world through its documenting, preserving and promoting functions. In spite of the restrictions on its availability and potential use among members of endangered language communities for the reasons mentioned above, we can safely assume with Buszard-Wechler, (op. cit.) that

> *the importance of the Web in creating and maintaining community can only grow...* [and that] *communities and site developers [should] think of the Web as capable of functions such as providing the opportunity for community members to meet and use language interactively with each other.*

Tamazight (and Tamazgha) on the Web

As the title of the present paper suggests, it is meant to consider the case of Tamazight through an assessment of the situation of this language (and its community, Tamazgha) on the Web, and the potential that this technology offers for its preservation and promotion. The assumption is that, although this language is almost never mentioned in the literature on endangered languages, Tamazight, and by extension its community, is in danger of disappearing in the long-term in comparison to indigenous and minority languages in North and South America, Europe, Australia and Asia. For this reason, it is essential to start with establishing the degree of endangerness of Tamazight.

Is Tamazight an endangered language?

Before providing a brief survey and assessment of the presence of Tamazight on the Web, I think the

question *'Is Tamazight an endangered language?'* is worth-raising, particularly as a tentative answer to it will make the argument put forward more relevant. A reading through the list of endangered languages provided by the UNESCO (Clearing House for Endangered Languages), from which Tamazight is missing, points to the assumption that this language does not fulfill the criteria of endangerness. Although not necessarily an accurate measurement indicator, the number of speakers of a language is often used to determine its stage of endangerness. Obviously, if we apply some criteria that are normally taken into consideration when deciding whether to label a language as *'endangered'*, the answer to the question is *'No'*! For example, we may consider the number of native speakers of Tamazight (more than 20 million according to the most conservative estimates), compared to the number of speakers of some native languages which are considered as endangered languages and for which a few hundred native speakers at the most have been reported. **However**, if we accept the fact that a *'moribund'* language is one that *'is spoken by adults only who no longer teach [it] to the next generation'* (Crawford, 1994) and that this is a characteristic of endangered languages, this situation partly applies in the case of Tamazight as it has been noticed that more and more Imazighen prefer their children to learn the *'other'* language. This is one cause that has been advanced for the '*suicide*' model of language death where a speech community

> *sometimes decides for reasons of functional economy to suppress a part of itself, [and] multilingual parents no longer consider it necessary or worthwhile for the future of their children to communicate with them in a low-prestige language variety... (Denison, 1977 : 21, cited in Crawford, 1994)*

We may also look at the issue from a human rights perspective and assume that Imazighen as Moroccans or Algerians, for example, do enjoy the same rights as other citizens of the countries in which the language is spoken. In this case the notion that a

> *language-oppressed person is one who is under political, economic and social pressure, to abandon a native language in favor of a politically, economically or socially dominant language* (Wechsler, 1995)

should not hold for Tamazight and its native speakers. **However,** very recent history tells us of Imazighen (the people) in different parts of Tamazgha (the land) whose right to be educated in their mother tongue has been denied, of instances where giving children Amazigh names ('Numidia', 'Thif Thaziri', and 'Sifaw' among others) has been considered against the law of the land, and of Amazigh geonames (names of places) which have completely disappeared from the maps of Amazigh regions.

Therefore, although Tamazight has millions of native speakers, and although its native speakers enjoy some of the rights of people who live in democratic countries, we may safely assume that it is *'partly endangered'*, to say the least, and that unless effective action is taken to preserve and promote it, the risk is looming that it will become *'totally endangered'* within the next generation.

2. A brief survey of Tamazight and Tamazgha on the Net

It is possible to assess the contribution of the Internet to the documentation, preservation and promotion of Tamazight language and culture through a survey of the Web sites devoted to this language, taking into consideration a) the aims for which they have been set up, and b) their content and the way it is organised. The assessment of these two components should allow us to make a fair judgement about the extent to which these sites are actually contributing to the cause of Tamazight.

2.1. Aims of the sites

The ever-growing number of Tamazight Web sites attests to the vitality and active contribution of these sites to the cause of the language and culture of Imazighen. Although all of them seem to share this general aim, some of the developers specify rather explicitly the purposes for which their sites have been set up. Whereas local individuals and organisations tend to take aims for granted, individuals and, more particularly, organisations outside Tamazgha make a point of specifying their aims. For example, the first few lines of the home page of the Amazigh Cultural Association in America (ACAA) refer to this organisation as one

> *organised and operated exclusively for cultural, educational, and scientific purposes to contribute to saving, promoting, and enriching the Amazigh (Berber) language and culture* (ACAA).

Another example is that of the Amazigh World Congress Web site where the aims of the site itself are not specified, but where the aims of the organisation are clearly spelt out in a document entitled *'Historique et Objectifs du CMA'*. Among these aims are striving towards a constitutional and institutional recognition of Tamazight identity, promoting and modernising Tamazight language and culture, establishing relationships among Imazighen in all areas and coordinating their action at the international level (Amazigh World Congress, 1995). Compared to this, one of the most recent sites developed in Morocco (Tinghir.org) leaves it to the visitor to infer from the content column the aims behind developing the site. However, a reading of the content items of all the sites visited reveals the implicit aims of the developers, pointing to an agreement among all that the preservation and the promotion of Tamazight is an ultimate aim which they try to achieve through storing and disseminating information about the community, about

issues of potential concern to Imazighen and about the ways of contributing to the revival and maintenance of their language and culture.

Another aim mentioned in some sites is the promotion of human rights through emphasising

> *the human rights issues involving a people who are struggling to retain their native culture and language, and who demand the right to self-identification* (World Amazigh Action Coalition : World Amazigh Congress).

This is a feature of Amazigh Web sites which has become more visible with the recent events in Algeria.

2.2. Content of Web sites

Following from the brief discussion of the aims for which Tamazight Web sites have been designed, we may expect the content of these sites to reflect their developers' concern with issues such as documenting, revitalising and promoting Tamazight for purposes of avoiding its endangerness and potential death. To this effect, the most important functions of the content of Tamazight Web sites that may be inferred from item listings are community building, promoting teaching and learning, and disseminating information of concern to individuals and groups interested in the fate of Tamazight.

The World Wide Web, as its name suggests, is meant to put people across the world in touch with each other. This seems to be the most important function of Tamazight Web sites which make it possible for local members of the community as individuals or membeffhi of organisations to be in relation with other locals as well as with non-locals. It has contributed to the extension of the Amazigh community in such a way that it now gathers Imazighen from all parts of the world who have at heart the struggle to keep their language and culture alive. This aim is achieved through the display of information about the history, the language and the culture of the community of native speakers in the form of audio and visual texts, reference materials such as lexicons, news items depicting current events of interest to members of the community, and discussion forums and e-mail lists. A worth-noting feature of this community building function of the content of Amazigh Web sites is that it is addressed to non-locals in the first place, knowing that it is only a tiny minority of locals who can afford computer equipment and Internet connection. However, this is a situation that is likely to change in the near future with the proliferation of cyber-cafés, particularly in Morocco and Algeria where the biggest communities of native speakers of Tamazight are.

A second important component of the content of Web sites dedicated to Tamazight language and culture is teaching and learning. Although organised in a rather non-systematic way in most of the sites that emphasise this function, teaching and learning the language seems to be high on the agenda of site developers. In addition to on-line courses and lessons, and various didactic materials (on-line dictionaries, Tifinagh fonts for writing Tamazight, lists of vocabulary items with translations into French and/or English, etc.), the sites provide access to socio-cultural aspects of the language such as poems, songs, proverbs and customs and values which have the potential of reinforcing the linguistic content and developing in the learners the spirit of community discussed earlier. However, the impression the visitor to these sites gets is that most of the teaching/learning material is addressed to members of the community who have little or no knowledge of Tamazight (they do exist!) and non-native speakers, rather than to native speakers who regularly use the language. Other items contained in Tamazight Web sites are e-commerce, in most cases meant for fund-raising purposes, and links to other Amazigh related sites.

A last comment to be made about Web sites devoted to Tamazight language and culture concerns their aesthetic value, in so far as it can determine their impact on the visitor. As mentioned in the section on the promotion of endangered languages, the *'cool'* aspect of some Web sites may contribute a great deal to the development of more positive attitudes among people about these languages and help promote their status. In this respect, the aesthetic quality and organisation of the Internet sites dedicated to Tamazight varies from the most professionally designed to the mediocre. This points to the necessity for site developers to seek professional support, taking into consideraion the needs and interests of potential visitors.

This section has been devoted to a brief description of the content of Tamazight Web sites and the function of this content. As with other sites on endangered languages, it seems that two essential functions are assigned to this content, viz. community building and enhancing the teaching and learning of the endangered language. Both functions are consistent with the maintenance role of the Internet in documenting, preserving and promoting the language. As two of the most important distinguishing characteristics of endangered languages are a drastic reduction in the number of their natives speakers and a danger of disappearance of their communities, revitalising the language through teaching and learning and maintaining the community identity constitute the two basic goals of any effort at maintaining these languages, and Tamazight, a *'partly threatened'* language, is no exception to this rule.

Implications for action

It has now been attested beyond any doubt that the Internet is one of the few, if not the only, communications and information media not easily restricted by legal or otherwise regulations, with a tremendous potential for promoting endangered languages and reversing current trends of endangerness

through storing, processing and disseminating information essential for the process of maintenance. Internet users concerned with issues of language endangerness can not only document and describe (*'doing science'*), but also *'assist, defend and maintain'* endangered languages (*'social activism'*) (Weschler, 1995). The implications for the Internet functions of community building and teaching and learning, with special reference to the case of Tamazight, are far reaching and may be summed up as follows :

1. The role of the local members of the community in enhancing the maintenance of their language and culture can be reinforced through making the technology and the means of using it (technical and financial) available so that they can enjoy the fundamental right to access and use of the information on the Internet. As already pointed out, computer equipment and Internet connection are far beyond the modest financial means of members of the communities whose languages are endangered and who, generally, belong to the most economically and socially vulnerable groups. Given this last fact, it is the responsibility of associations and individuals who share the common goal of contributing to the maintenance of Tamazight, as well as non-governmental organisations concerned with human rights, to initiate projects and programmes aiming at introducing as many members of the community of Tamazight as possible to the Internet and training them on how to make the most effective use of it for community building and *'using the language interactively with each other'* (Buszard-Welcher).

2. As a great majority of the Web sites dedicated to the promotion of Tamazight language and culture have been developed outside Tamazgha (in Europe and North America), we may wonder whether the community building achieved by the content of these sites is not taking place at the expense of local community building. Such a situation may lead to the development of two communities : one *'non-local'*, elitist and possessing the know-how and the financial means to develop sites which are meant to contribute to the maintenance of Tamazight, and one *'local'* , computer illiterate and unable to benefit from the adavantages of the internet in terms of community building and learning the language. This fact points to an important restriction on the use of the Internet for purposes of maintaining Tamazight, and the need for associations and individuals concerned to lift this restriction for all Imazighen to be able to enjoy the right of being informed through the Net about the efforts being made to maintain their language and culture and how they can contribute to the achievement of this goal. As Crawford (1994) rightly asserts :

> *If endangered languages are to be saved, it is crucial for native speakers to see the value of doing so and get actively involved in the process.*

3. The third implication of the argument developed in this paper concerns the content of Web sites and the way it is organised for the aim of documenting, preserving and maintaining Tamazight. The proliferation of Web sites has meant a quantitative proliferation of information about issues related to the community, its language and its culture. However, the way this information is organised, and the often subjective tone in which it is transmitted, particularly in e-mail lists and other discussion forums, may jeopardise the efforts of Web site developers and people involved in supplying information. As mentioned earlier, a more professional design of the Web sites is likely to add the aesthetic touch necessary to enhance their *'coolness'* and attractiveness to potential visitors. Although the number of visitors of a site on the Net is not necessarily an accurate indicator of its succes and effectiveness, it often points to visitors' perception of the degree of interest of the issues implied in its content.

4. The last, and perhaps most important implication in the case of Tamazight is a political/educational one, as the most effective way of preserving a language from endangerness is teaching/learning and using it informally at home and outside home, and formally in educational institutions. Given that the language planning policies so far adopted in the countries of Tamazgha have always made a point of marginalising Tamazight, in spite of political discourse claiming the contrary, advocating the use of the Internet to maintain this language may sound unrealistic, to say the least. To take the case of Tamazight in Morocco, great hopes were raised when the late King Hassan II officially advocated the teaching of this language (Speech of August 20, 1994). However, to date, the pledge has not been fulfilled, and all the Educational Reform Charter has done is to confuse the issue even further by stipulating that Tamazight be taught at primary school as a way of *'facilitating the learning of Arabic'*!

The success of native language literacy programmes in other parts of the world (North America and Australia, for example) has been the result of strong commitment on the part of all concerned, most particularly educational planners, to insure political support, funding and human resources to the teaching of native endangered languages. It is, therefore, the responsibility of everybody who has at heart the cause of Tamazight, to contribute to a peacefully and rationally conducted struggle for institutionalising and constitutionalising this language, so that its status entitles it to the same rights and privileges as other languages. This is the only way we can turn a *'partially endangered'* language into one of which all the future generations of Amazigh children are proud.

Conclusion

In this paper, I have tried explicitly or implicitly, to raise three issues which seem essential for understanding the potential role of the Internet in contributing to the maintenance of endangered languages, with a special reference to the case of Tamazight. The argument put forward in addressing the first one is that the Internet is

essential in community building and maintaining these languages through documentation, preservation and promotion, under the condition that members of the communities concerned are empowered intellectually, economically and politically, in such a way that they can use it for effectively contributing to the maintenance of their languages. The second question concerns the endangerness of Tamazight and the evidence proposed suggests that this language is *'partly endangered'* and runs the risk of becoming *'fully endangered'* in the next two generations if nothing is done to preserve it and promote its status. The last question addressed raises the issue of the possibility of the Internet becoming one among the most important tools for maintaining Tamazight and reversing the present trend of shift affecting it. In addition to the reservation made for the use of the Internet in maintaining endangered languages in general, the specific situation of Tamazight warrants further reservations dictated by the somewhat dominated position of this language in the language market and its marginalisation in language planning policies. We will be able to talk, I hope and *'there is always hope'*, about the role of the Internet in maintaining Tamazight when Amazigh children can enjoy the right to learn their native language at school, perhaps using computers and the Internet. As forcefully stated by Crawford (1994), *'To put it bluntly, the decisive factor in the survival of Native American languages will be politics...'* And, politics it is now in the case of Tamazight!

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Foundation for Endangered Languages http://www.ogmios.org

International Clearing House for Endangered Languages http://www.tooyoo.l.u-tokyo.ac.jp/ichel.html

Linguistic Society of America Committee on Endangered Languages and their Preservation http://www.lsadc.org/web2/fldfr.htm

Tinghir (Amraoui Said) http:www.tinghir.org/?accueil

UNESCO (Red Book on Endangered Languges) http://www.helsinki.fi/~tasalmin/europe_report.html

World Amazigh Congress http://www.tamurt-imazighen.com/imazighen/

The Role of Language in the Construction of Ethnic Identity on the Internet: The Case of Assyrian Activists in Diaspora

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If you wander through the whole world: take your language with you
And take it as a part of the household: for your Assyrian son.
If you lose your language: with it you lose your name
And if your name is forgotten: your seed will be wiped out[1].

Abstract

Language has long been recognized to have an important role in the social construction of ethnic identity. Although the Internet is still a recent addition to communication media, scholars have already noted that it too may have a considerable impact on the social construction of community. It is perhaps unsurprising then that language issues permeate the Internet.

For the Assyrian community in diaspora the Internet has become a very important tool in the social construction of community. There are numerous Assyrian web pages, Internet radio broadcasts, electronic magazines, newsgroups, discussion groups, and chat rooms. Issues related to language pervade them.

The present paper will examine the way in which Assyrian activists use language on the Internet in the construction of an Assyrian ethnic identity. It will examine arguments presented on the Internet over the correct ethnic group label, etymologies for the term "Assyrian," and the relationship among the various Neo-Aramaic dialects. Next it will consider the social functions of codeswitching among English, Turoyo and Assyrian Neo-Aramaic on the Internet. Finally it will discuss the Assyrians' efforts at language maintenance through the Internet including the development of appropriate fonts, dictionaries, language and literacy lessons and the publication of books and articles in and about the Aramaic languages in the community's verbal repertoire.

Introduction

Although the Internet is still a recent addition to communication media, it has already had a considerable impact on the social construction of community for many peoples. This phenomenon has drawn the attention of a number of social scientists. Indeed, the entire winter 1998 issue of the Journal *Cultural Survival Quarterly* was devoted to the analysis of the role the Internet plays for various ethnic groups.

While the public at large tends to consider ethnicity to be a given, there is a general consensus among social scientists today, stemming in great part from the seminal volume edited by Barth, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries* (1969), that ethnicity is socially constructed (cf. Al-Rasheed, 1998; Jenkins, 1997; Spickard and Burroughs, 2000). According to Barth ethnic identity is generated, confirmed or transformed in the course of social interaction. Furthermore, Barth notes that the features which the actors take into account are not the sum of objective differences but only those which the actors themselves regard as significant.

One cultural feature long recognized as having an intimate relationship with ethnic identity is language. Today that relationship is the focus of interest of social scientists from a wide range of disciplines who are investigating issues of ethnicity and nationalism. Fishman, a scholar particularly renowned for his work on language and ethnicity, notes that although the link between language and ethnicity "is not an inevitable one it is clearly a highly likely one..." (1989: 47). Lambert (1979) and Giles (1979), among others, have noted that even a small amount of oral language produced by a speaker may be sufficient to elicit a full set of ethnic attributes in the mind of a hearer. In addition, the role of language in marking ethnicity as well as in marking in-group versus out-group relationships has been extensively treated by those scholars investigating the phenomenon of codeswitching (cf. Gumperz, 1982; Heller, 1988; and Myers-Scotten, 1993).

The importance of language has also been noted by scholars such as Anderson (1983) and Seton-Watson (1977) who examine the role of the social construction of identity in the origin of nations. Both Anderson and Seton-Watson emphasize the importance of the history of language in understanding the development of nationalism. They stress the role of print-languages, lexicographers, grammarians, philologists and literary figures.

The Assyrian Case

While it is clear that language generally has an important role in the construction of social identity, it may come to have a particularly important role in diaspora communities whose members may feel threatened by a loss of or uncertainty about ethnic identity. For two reasons such

[1] Excerpt from a poem by the noted Assyrian poet, Geewargis D-BetBinyamin (1986). English translation by Erica McClure.

problems are extremely intense among Assyrians[2], a Middle Eastern Christian people speaking a Neo-Aramaic language. First, although the Assyrians' traditional homeland included Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria, today they have neither their own nation state nor an autonomous region within an existing nation state, and the ranks of those living in diaspora continue to swell. Second, ethnic identity has been a shifting social construct for Assyrians. Indeed there is no general consensus in the modern Assyrian community with respect to: (1) the existing peoples who should be included within the ethnic group, (2) the roots of the ethnic group - Assyrian, Aramean, other or a combination thereof, and (3) the correct label for the ethnic group - Assyrian, Aramean, Chaldean, Suraya, Suryoyo or other.

The importance of the Internet to the Assyrian community is eloquently described in an article by Albert Gabrial, *Assyrians: "3000 Years of History, Yet the Internet is Our Only Home"* which appeared in the issue of *Cultural Survival* mentioned above. In that article Gabrial notes:

> Today, Assyrians are one of the most widely scattered indigenous peoples. Most Assyrian families in the U.S. generally have relatives in Australia, Sweden, Lebanon, Iraq, or Canada. For such a small nation scattered throughout the world, the Internet is a dream come true. (Gabrial, 1998: 43)

The importance of a virtual homeland to a stateless community much of whose population is in diaspora is brought out anew at each visit to the links page on Gabrial's website (http://www.nineveh.com) where one is greeted by the words "Welcome to your land on the Cyber Space".

A more extensive investigation of the role that the Internet plays among Assyrians is published on a website which is a part of the research project Music - Media - Multiculture (MMM) of the Royal Swedish Academy of Music in Stockholm, Sweden. That article by Lundberg (1997), entitled *A VIRTUAL ASSYRIA*, explores the role that music and the Internet play in the construction of Assyrian ethnicity. Lundberg, like Gabrial, concludes that for Assyrians "in an unstable existence in exile round the world, Internet websites and homepages can truly be seen as a kind of virtual home - a fixed point where common values and common culture can be established and shared with others". He states that since Assyrians lack the institutions of a nation state, the construction of an international network has enormous significance. He points out that the Internet has made it possible for communities other than nation states to build up "national" information banks, noting that "throughout the world Assyrian idealists are putting in a tremendous amount of work, writing articles and producing link sites and publishing music, literature and pictures."

As suggested by both the articles by Gabrial and Lundberg, the Assyrians have indeed been pioneers in the use of the Internet to establish a global community, a virtual nation in cyber space. They have had both an early and a strong Internet presence. The websites ASSYRIA ONLINE and Nineveh On-Line, the newsgroup soc.culture.assyrian and the electronic newsmagazine ZINDA (formerly ZENDA) were all established in 1995.

Given the relatively small size of the Assyrian community[3], the strong and continually expanding Assyrian Internet presence is particularly impressive. Indeed, by following links from such major websites as ASSYRIA ONLINE, Beth Suryoyo Othuroyo, and Nineveh On-Line, the author recently located more than 650 Assyrian websites. Moreover, the Assyrian sites are not only numerous, but in many cases they are also frequently visited. For example, writing in 1998, Gabrial (1998:44) noted that Nineveh On-Line (www. nineveh.com) was receiving more than 100,000 visitors per month. The importance which activists within the Assyrian community ascribe both to language and the Internet is attested to by the fact that at the enormous annual convention of The Assyrian American National Federation (AANF) held in September of 2000 in Chicago, a two hour session on language and the Internet was one of the six panels presented. Its title was "Language, Internet and Computing: What does the future hold for us?"

Nomenclature

The lack of a general consensus among the different segments of the modern Assyrian people both with respect to which communities should be included within the ethnic group and with respect to the name which should be given to that group[4] is mirrored in the diversity of ethnic labels associated with Assyrian websites. For example, a cursory search of the web reveals sites entitled Aramäer Online, Assyria Online, Chaldeans On Line, Suryoyo Online, and Syriac.de. The lack of consensus has also given rise to frequent debates on the various Internet forums, debates which were greatly intensified by the decision of the U.S. Bureau of the Census to use the conjoined label "Assyrian/Chaldean/Syriac" in reference to the group in

[2] In this paper the term Assyrian when applied to a modern people has been used to refer to all those of Middle Eastern origin whose mother tongue (or that of their ancestors) is a Neo-Aramaic language and whose families traditionally belonged to the Church of the East, the Chaldean Church,the Syrian Orthodox Church or the Syrian Catholic Church. Following the linguists Tsereteli (1978) and Odisho (1988), the term modern Assyrian has been used exclusively to refer to the group of dialects known as Northeastern Neo-Aramaic commonly referred to by native speakers as Surith. It should, however, be pointed out that the name Assyrian when applied to the Neo-Aramaic languages and dialects spoken by members of this group may be somewhat misleading since they belong to the West Semitic branch of the Semitic language family while the term Assyrian has traditionally been applied by linguists to the dialect or language (Semiticists differ with respect to the status they accord it) spoken in the Assyrian Empire which together with Babylonian is known as Akkadian. Akkadian formed the East Semitic branch of the Semitic family and is extinct.

[3] Estimates of the size of the Assyrian population worldwide vary between more than three million to fewer than one million.

[4] Use of the native language terms *Suraya/Suryaya* in Northeastern Neo-Aramaic and their equivalent in Turoyo *Suroyo/Suryoyo* do not provoke controversy. It is their English language translation that occasions the difficulty.

Census 2000. This term has been accepted by some as indicated by the texts in examples one through three below, excerpts from a holiday greeting posted on the Hujådå Forum by its webmaster, an official position statement by the president of the Assyrian Academic Society published in ZINDA, and a message posted by the co-chair of the "Chaldeans for Census" committee on the Assyrian Forum. The last text is of particular interest since it explicitly mentions language as the criterial feature for the determination of ethnic identity.

While some Assyrian individuals and organizations embrace the conjoined label, others reject it completely on the basis that "Assyrian" is an ethnic group label, "Chaldean" the name of a religious group, and "Syriac" the name of a language. The position of those who embrace the name "Assyrian" while rejecting the conjoined label is eloquently presented in a message posted on the Assyrian Forum by William Warda. Excerpts from this posting may be found in example four.

The view that only "Assyrian" is an ethnic label and therefore is the only correct term of the three appearing in the conjoined label of Census 2000 is also contested. Here the claim that is made is that the term "Assyrian" is generally associated with one specific Christian religious denomination, The Church of the East. This view is well expressed in example five, an excerpt from a message posted on the Beth Suryoyo Othuroyo Forum in response to an earlier posting there by William Warda.

However, others affirm that the term "Assyrian" does not denote any specific Christian denomination and in fact has no religious connotation at all. This position is seen in the excerpts from messages also posted on the Beth Suryoyo Othuroyo forum and reproduced in examples six through eight. In these responses to messages associating Assyrian identity with Christianity, the respondents affirm the position that the term "Assyrian" is purely an ethnic group label. Interestingly the respondent in example eight not only rejects arguments about ethnicity based on religion but also based on language and script as well.

1. Greetings to all of our Syriac/Chaldean/Assyrian peoples. Merry Christmas to all, and wishing you a happy new year.
(http://f16.parsimony.ney/forum28689messages/31.htm, 26 Dec 1999 04:39:21)

2. The category label of "Assyrian/Chaldean/Syriac" has come up against much contention and controversy.
...
The AAS believes that all of the designations, "Assyrian/Chaldeans/Syriac," refer to the same people. However, no one can impose an identity on a person or a group which does not desire such identity. This is the position of the US Bureau of Census and the AAS completely understands this position and respects it.

Let the record show that the Assyrian Academic Society Board of Directors unanimously endorsed the designation of "Assyrian/Chaldean/Syriac." ...
http://www.assyrianinfo.com/znda0607.htm)

3. Since Census goal is to highlight the number of my people that live in United States, I defy anyone that can tell me Assyrian numbers are not addable with Chaldean and Syriac numbers to come to a single total for all people that speak "Sureth". Keep in mind that this action does not change history or any differences that might be existing between brothers (or maybe sisters). All what the Bureau of the Census said is that as far as Americans are concerned, the three numbers are one. This is an advantage that no one should dispute for the mere reason of that "there is strength in numbers".

As a Co-Chair of The Chaldeans for Census 2000 committee, I am proud to be an Assyrian at times, Chaldean at others and feel genuinely close to Syriac brothers and sisters. In summary, I can gladly and with pride indicate on the Census 2000 form that my ethnic origin is "Assyrian/Chaldean/Syriac".
(http://www.aina.org/bbs/index.cgi?read=9096
7 Feb. 2000 at 5:47 p.m.)

4. For the last 100 years Assyrians have literally fought on the battlefield, in the international political arena, the international public opinion to prove that they are not "Syrian," a name that has lost its meaning since the State of Syria became to be known as such. They have fought to prove that they are not Nestorians, Chaldeans, Jacobite, Syrian Orthodox or any other religious denomination. They have fought to tell the world that they are Assyrian.

In 1896 the Jacobite Assyrians from Diarbaker who had migrated to the United States established a school association which they could have called: Jacobite, Syrian Orthodox, Syrian, Aramean, Diarbakerian Christians or hundreds of other names, but they proudly called it: the "Assyrian School Association of America."

I say a unity that requires three names to be identified as [such] is not unity; it is a recipe for disaster. As far as I am concerned we are either Assyrians, or we are not. If we are, there is not reason to change our name; if we are not, then we should not pretend that we are.

There is no reason for us to water down our Assyrian identity for the sake of those who will never recognize themselves as Assyrians. We would be better off to be few, proud, brave and united Assyrians than to be a conglomerate of different people each quarreling to impose its name and identity on others.

This will not stop us from stretching our hands to welcome anyone who believes that he and she is Assyrian or writing the history of our people so that they all will know what has happened to them during the last 26 centuries and how they have come to be known by so many different names. Or to sit with our brothers in the Chaldean and Syriac communities to discuss the issues that have divided us.
(http://www.aina.org/bbs/index.cgi?read=7865
posted on 19 Jan. 2000 2:23 a.m.)

5. >The name Assyrian means the descendant of the ancient Assyrians and the Syriac speaking people of Mesopotamia, has nothing to do with religious denomination. It equally belongs to the members of all of churches[5].

You might be one of the few who think of it that way. However the majority equate Assyrian to the Assyrian Church. In that context the term Assyrian is a pure religious name, and has nothing to do with national identity. It is exactly the same way when someone says the Chaldean, Church or the Syriac Church.

A simple example is to ask an average member of the Church of the East the following question:

What church do you belong to?

His reply will be:

The Assyrian Church.

This is the essence of the name problem, because neither the Chaldean nor the Syriac/Suryoyo belong to the Assyrian Church. For a simple reason, and that is their church is not called Assyrian.

Currently this is the fact and common understanding; don't waste our time trying to justify the name Assyrian because this is how we perceive it. As long as Assyrian remains the name of a church, then everyone will stick to the name of his own church. (http://www.f21.parsimony.net/forums37811/messages/1380.htm, posted on 28 Aug. 2000 22:27:22)

6. Dear brother, what you believe is wrong or right is up to you! We already have Assyrian Muslims and Jews, Shani (please do not continue excluding them). (http://www.f21.parsimony.net/37811/messages/1412.htm, posted on 01 Sept. 2000 11:14:03)

7. That's sad shani - that u would disregard ure own pple an assyrian is born an assyrian - but is later babtised christian or circumcised muslim or jew

our nation is our religion
one is initiated into assyrianism at birth

one's personal beliefs are between him/her and God (http://www.f21.parsimony.net/forums37811/messages/1415.htm, posted on 01 Sept. 2000 14:38:41)

8. >As Assyrians, it is wrong to marry outside our Christian religion. Because of our Christian religion we indirectly maintained our Assyrian ethnicity. All the Assyrians who were forcefully or otherwise converted into other religions became assimilated into different cultures.

You are wrong because there are Assyrians who are not Christians!

Personally I am a Moslem Assyrian ..

By the way what makes you more Assyrian than I am? And how do you know if Non-Christian Assyrians are assimilated or not? You dropped your ancestors' religion, script and language too! (http://www.f21.parsimon.net/forums37811/messages/1430.htm posted on 05 Sept. 2000 by Mohammad Ashur)

Etymology

For many centuries when speaking their own language, speakers of Eastern Neo-Aramaic have self identified as "Suryaye" (Northeastern Neo-Aramaic) or "Suryoye" (Turoyo), and more recently they have also used the variants "Suraye" (Northeastern Neo-Aramaic) and "Suroye" (Turoyo)[6]. The etymology of the word "Suraye"/"Suroye" is another topic which has been extensively debated on Assyrian Internet sites[7]. The etymologies offered differ according to the preferred self-identification in English or other European language of the writer, Assyrian versus Aramaen or Syriac (Syrian). A website for the Syrian Orthodox Church provides an account of the derivation of the church name written by the patriarch H.H. Mar Ignatius Yacoub III which states:

9. This name was derived from Cyrus the king of Persia (559-529) who conquered Babylon (539 B.C.) and liberated the Jews by permitting them to return to Judea...The name "Syrian" is equivalent to the term "Christian" which was applied to the disciples in Antioch for the first time, because those converted Jews believed that Cyrus, their liberator from captivity in 538 B.C. resembled Christ the liberator of captive mankind...This name was used in Syria to distinguish between the Christian Arameans and the Arameans who were not yet converted... Likewise, the Aramaic language was called Syriac. Until the present days the Christians who speak Syriac, are called in this sense, "Suroye" or "Suraye" or "Curyaye". [http://www.staff.murdoch.edu.au/~t-issa/syr/details/name.html]

Modern Assyrian nationalists argue that the name "Assyrian" has been used by their people throughout their

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[5]Arrowheads introduce material from an earlier posting included by a respondent in his posting.

[6]Heinrichs (1993: 102) states, "One should note, *en passant*, that in Tuoyo the two words mean different things: *suryoyo* <<Syrian>> and *suroyo* (sic, emphatic /s/ <<Christian>> (Ritter [1979,214,465 and 481]).

The Northeastern Neo-Aramaic speaker Peter BetBasoo draws no distinction between the parallel Northeastern Neo-Aramaic terms *Suraya* and *Suryaya*. He states (personal e-mail communication Sept. 15, 2000), "'Suraya' also means "Christian," but that usage has all but disappeared and is rarely used now."

[7]For a scholarly discussion of the etymology of the name Assyrian when applied to the community in question see Heinrichs (1993).

history. One argument which is offered to substantiate this position is based on the derivation of the term "Suraye" from the term "Asuraye." This argument is illustrated in example ten, a quote from a website established by Peter BetBasoo. It includes his response to a previously posted argument deriving the term "Suryaye" from King Cyrus. A related argument posted by Fred Aprim on the Beth Suryoyo Othuroyo Forum, is presented in example eleven.

10. >I think the idea that the title of our PEOPLE, Syrian was derived from the word Assyrian is in a way very simplistic. For this reason it may appeal to many people, but it is simply wrong. Because how do you account for the timing??? Why after thousands of years of such a rich history between the Aramaeans and Assyrians, the name "Syrian" suddenly appear to describe our people AFTER the coming of Christ? The derivation of the word Syrian from the name of the Persian King Cyrus is the most likely scenario.

    What is the problem of timing? It is completely reasonable to expect a word to EVOLVE in pronunciation. The original word for 'fortnight' (which means 'two weeks' in English) was 'fourteen nights'. Over time this compound word contracted to 'fortnight'. As any speaker of Assyrian knows the letter A (allap) is very flexible and can appear and disappear. It is not at all unreasonable, and it is the most logical explanation BECAUSE it is the simplest explanation, that Assuraya → suraya, a simple dropping of the initial allap. Assyrians will say "Akhona' or 'khona', and both are perfectly intelligible.

    Your argument that "Cyrus" is the most logical etymology has several fatal flaws:
    1) The ORIGINAL name is Chosreos (korish in Assyrian). How does Chosreos transform to suraya?
    2) Most importantly, there is written evidence of the word 'suraya' being used long before Cyrus came on the scene."
    [http:www.netadventure.com/~soc/SORFForum/messages/230.html]

11. The English word "Assyrian" comes from classical Greek "Assurios" through Latin "Assyrius"; the Greeks borrowed it in the 8th century BC directly from the Assyrians, who at that time called themselves "Assurayeh," originating from their capital city "Assur". The Aramaic word "Athourayeh" was likewise borrowed from Assyrian, but earlier, in the 12th century BC, when the later "Assurayeh" was pronounced "Athourayeh" [the sound (th) shifted to (s) in Assyrian about 1100 BC]; still earlier, about 2300-1600 BC, the word had been pronounced "Ashur" and "Ashourayeh". The initial syllable in "Assurayeh" was frequently dropped in the Neo-Assyrian period (900-600 BC), so that "Assurayeh" also had a variant "Surayeh," which the Greeks took over as "Surios" (the English equivalent being Syrian). There was originally no difference in meaning between Assurayeh/Surayeh and Assurios/Surios; both meant the same thing. The Arabs borrowed their terms "Ashur/Ashuri" or "Assyria/Assyrian" from the Jews; their Suryan "Syrian" is a loanword from Greek "Surios."

    The term Syrian is merely the shortened form and a Christian adaptation of the word "Assyrian," which Assyrians may with equal right take to themselves as their most proper name; and that, originally, they are not from Syria proper as the term "Syrians" would suggest, but from Assyria. Many other historians attest to this fact like Herodotus. Professor Richard N. Frye of Harvard University says: It seems clear that the general terms "Assyrian" and "Syrian" were regarded as synonyms not only in early times but late into the medieval period by at least some people in the East. Therefore, singular "Suraya" is "Syrian" and is "Assyrian".

    In summary, Assyrians were called "Athourayeh" and Ashurayeh (Assurayeh). With the dropping of the first syllable (A) we began to call ourselves "Surayeh." The Greeks came in contact with us and called us "Surios" or "Syrians." The Arabs took this name and used it literally with a very minor change in the pronunciation, calling us "Sir-yan" meaning "Syrian" and "Assyrian". It worth mentioning too that the Arabs through their more recent Arabic studies kept our original Semitic names "Ashouri" and "Athouri" and used them as they are. Therefore, all these names; Assyrian, Athourayeh, Ashourayeh, Surayeh, Syrian, Sir-yan, Suryaya and Suryoyo mean the same thing. (http://www.f21.parsimony.net/forum37811/messages/1437.htm posted on 06 Sept. 2000 20:01)

Relationship Between Linguistic Varieties

Not only religious affiliation but also linguistic background can be a source of complications in the definition of who is in fact an Assyrian. The Modern Aramaic dialects are divided by Hoberman (1989) into Western Aramaic represented by Ma'lula, Bakh'a and Jubb'Adin and Eastern Aramaic divided into Northeastern Aramaic, Turoyo, Mlahso, and Modern Mandaic. However, some scholars have classified Turoyo as a central group intermediate between Western Aramaic and Northeastern Aramaic. Regardless of their classification of Turoyo, most linguists consider Turoyo and Northeastern Neo-Aramaic (Assyrian) to be different, though very closely related, languages. Among those Turoyo and Assyrian speakers who consider themselves members of the same ethnic community, this view is widely disputed, and indeed the relationship between Turoyo and Assyrian has frequently been the subject of discussion on Assyrian Internet forums. The view that all of the Neo-Aramaic dialects spoken by the Assyrian community broadly defined - that is all Northeastern Neo-Aramaic dialects as well as Turoyo - should be considered dialects of one language is clearly articulated in examples twelve and thirteen, excerpts from messages posted by Raman Michael on the Hujådå Forum and by William Warda on the Assyrian Forum:

12. Those whom you call "real Assyrians" speak the same language as those whom you call "real Arameans". All languages have dialects, which is what our nation has, two major dialects. So either we are all Assyrians

or we are all Arameans because we speak one language. The Assyrians of the late neo-Assyrian empire (7th-8th century BC) spoke and wrote in Aramaic because by that time Assyria had adopted the Aramaic language.
(http://fl6.parsimony.net/forum28689/messages/113.htm posted on 01 Ja. 2000 23:53)

13. In addition to proving that Eastern and Western Assyrians including members of the Chaldean church were massacred we need also to educate everyone that the names Jacobites, Nestorians, Chaldeans, Syrians, Siryanis and the rest pertain to people divided by religious denominations who share the same culture, language, heritage and nationality which is Assyrian; otherwise everybody thinks that these are different people and their multiplicity undermines their proper recognition and the importance of their cause.
(http://www.aine.org/bbs/index.cgi?read=13785)

A somewhat different view is articulated in a Chaldean site devoted to language. There the author seems to be concerned with showing the unity of the dialects spoken by members of the Church of the East and the Chaldean Church. Turoyo, spoken by people who are in large part members of the Syrian Orthodox Church, appears to have been ignored. Excerpts from the document may be seen in example fourteen below.

14. The Aramaic-Chaldean language is used by both Assyrians and Babylonians. The written form of Aramaic is the classical Chaldean and is the same for all users of Aramaic. The spoken form has several dialects that have acquired words of non-Aramaic usage.

    The two most prominent vernacular forms are these: 1) The dialect of Telkaif and the adjacent villages around Ninevah, and 2) the dialect of the northern Mesopotamian mountains on the borders of Iran and Turkey; this dialect is commonly referred to as Assyrian. (http://www.chaldean.net/people language.htl)

Those who feel that unity of language is important to the community but worry that differences in the varieties of Aramaic spoken by different segments of the Assyrian community may impede mutual understanding often promote the use of Classical Syriac ("leshana sipraya" or "leshana atiqa") rather than the vernacular language ("leshana swadaya"). Classical Syriac stands in a diglossic relationship with Assyrian Neo-Aramaic and with Turoyo. It is very closely related to both Neo-Aramaic languages; however, whether it is a direct lineal ancestor of the two is an issue which has not yet been resolved by Semiticists.

The difference between the Eastern and Western varieties of Classical Syriac, the liturgical languages of the Northeastern Neo-Aramaic speaking community and the Turoyo speaking community respectively, is far less than the difference between the vernacular languages of the two communities. However, while in the Turoyo speaking community only Classical Syriac is used as a written medium, in the Northeastern Neo-Aramaic speaking community there is a written literature in the vernacular as well. Members of the Turoyo speaking community have suggested that only Classical Syriac be used as a written language. This viewpoint is expressed in examples fifteen and sixteen, a message posted by Olaph Beth ("A B") on the Hujådå forum and response posted by George Stifo..

15. The problem is when the East Syriacs dropped the Classical Syriac and replaced it [with] the Colloquial Swadaya dialect (late 19th) Century. There is a difference between Swadaya and Syriac (not between Classical East Syriac and West Syriac); this is due to the large amount of foreign words that entered Swadaya from: Turkish, Kurdish, Persian, and Arabic; no wonder it is a different language and they can't communicate. In fact the gap grows larger if West Syriacs are to use their Turoyo dialect to write their language instead of Classical Syriac.

    If people are interested in Unity, then they should resort to Classical Syriac with Estrangelo Characters which are common to both East and West Syriacs.[8]
(http://fl6.parsimony.net/forum 28689/messages/122.htm posted on 01 Jan.,2000 07:36)

16. The issue of the language is very important. Actually, I perceive it to be more important than the name issue, because if we all speak the same language then we will feel like one people, regardless of what we call ourselves.

    As to your remarks Olaf Beth, then you said: If people are interested in Unity, then they should resort to Classical Syriiac with Estrangelo Characters which are common to both East and West Syriacs.

    I totally agree with you on that. But I think that the Zow'e are much easier to understand in the Western Script.... So maybe using Classical Syriac with the script of Estrangelo with the Serto Zow'e would be a perfect solution.
(http://fl6.parsimony.net/forum28689/messages/129.htm posted on 02 Jan., 2000 18:47)

In addition to arguing that all Neo-Aramaic dialects spoken by Assyrians be considered to be one language, those Assyrians who wish to use language as one means of unifying the community have used other tactics on the Internet as well. One widely used tactic is using both modern Assyrian and Turoyo equivalents in messages posted on the various Internet Forums of the community. To facilitate community members' use of phrases in each others' dialects, Assyria Online posted a list of commonly used Neo-Aramaic phrases. It provided English glosses together with translations in Turoyo and modern Assyrian (at http://www.aina.org/aol/langl.htm). Thus one frequently encounters messages containing greetings and closings in both modern Assyrian and Turoyo. This means of promoting solidarity is well illustrated in the message

[8]The Assyrians use three different alphabets only one of which, the Estrangelo script, is used by both modern Assyrian and Turoyo speakers.

posted by Michael Gabriel on the Assyrian Forum which is found in example seventeen.

17. Slomo myaqro/Shlama myoqra, [Peace respected one] you said, There are no Arameans left. They have all been assimilated into 1)Assyrian culture 2)Arab culture.
But indeed there are still three Qramaic villages surviving, Ma'lula, Guppa'od and Bakha, just being exact:)

push bashlomo/baslama [Remain in peace]
Ah'unokh bi Othuroyutho/Akhonokh b-Athurayutha [Your brother in Assyrianism]
(http://www.aina.org/bbs/index.cgi?read=11893 posted on 1 April 2000 12:43 pm)

Not only is codeswitching between Turoyo and modern Assyrian used to affirm common community membership but so too is codeswitching between English and Turoyo or between English and modern Assyrian. In the chat rooms and on the discussion forums, one frequently sees both Neo-Aramaic greetings and closings and often other words or phrases as well. The greetings "Shlama" (Peace), "Shlamalukh" (Peace to you sg.), "Shlamalokhun" (Peace to you pl.) or "Akhouna" (brother) are the most common, but one occasionally finds linguistically more complex greetings such as "Shlama elokhon Bnei Umti" (Peace to you children of fellow countrymen). The phrases B-shena (In peace), or Push b-shena ([you sg.] Remain in peace) are common closings, and, again, one occasionally encounters more complex phrases in closures, for example: "Hal d'Tapghakh Gov Atour" (Until we meet in Assyria). These modern Assyrian greetings when not paired with Turoyo greetings are more commonly seen on Internet sites with the word Assyrian in them. On sites identified with the words Aramean or Suryoyo if only one Neo-Aramaic form is given, that form tends to be in Turoyo. When Turoyo terms are paired with modern Assyrian forms, the intent appears to be to stress the common ethnicity of all segments of the Assyrian community by addressing both Turoyo and modern Assyrian speakers directly in their own language at one and the same time. When only one set of Neo-Aramaic terms is used in codeswitching, the stress appears to be on identification with a Neo-Aramaic speaking community as opposed to the much wider English speaking community.

Language Maintenance

For many Assyrian activists language maintenance is a key element in the struggle to ensure the survival of the Assyrian community. This viewpoint is expressed well in an excerpt from a monthly column by Ninva Ponsonby reproduced in example eighteen.

18. Want To Save The Assyrian Language?

.....

We Assyrians too often try to maintain that our numbers are larger than they actually are. Exaggerated as they may be, here they are irrelevant. It is more important to come to terms with the reality of the situation and do something about preserving the common bond between Assyrians, a language that is spoken by a dwindling number of people. This is not the time to thrash out our differences of opinion but to come together, and to make do with reasonable demands that can be met.

Whatever the motivation or driving force behind Arik Mordechai's efforts, the message at the end by Prof. Goldenburg (what Assyrians have been saying for centuries but now seems imminent) that the Assyrian language "may survive in some small villages in Syria or elsewhere, but in Israel, Aramaic will not remain more than one generation." The trouble is that Israel is not the only place where Eastern Aramaic (i.e. Assyrian) is under threat of extinction. Whether Mordechai's efforts will fuel international attention or die out, will depend in the main on the reaction and support of the Assyrian/Chaldean/Aramaic/Syriac speaking peoples around the globe. The die is cast, and the marketing template has already been drawn up, so what is needed is to channel all our energies in the same direction, publicizing and supporting Arik Mordechai's project, and other similar efforts, to preserve what was the Middle East's lingua franca for much of the biblical era: (Eastern) Aramaic.
(file:///a%7Chome.htm)

Assyrians have found in the Internet a strong tool in the fight for the maintenance of their language. While initially they were hampered in their efforts to expand community literacy in the Syriac alphabets by the necessity of using graphics programs to display them, that limitation has been overcome. It is now possible, for example, to post messages easily on the Assyrian Forum either in English or Assyrian simply by clicking on an icon to select the language desired. Furthermore, a number of different Syriac fonts have been developed which can be downloaded freely from the Internet. Beth Mardutho maintains a listing of links to free Syriac fonts and utilities including Syriac wordprocessors, right to left typing for Windows, and transliteration utilities (http://syrcom.cua.edu/SW/). For four years Dr. George Kiraz of Beth Mardutho directed a team which worked with Microsoft and developed open type fonts that allow the user to employ Syriac in a wide variety of Windows programs. In July of 2001 Microsoft Inc. made available its latest operating system, Windows XP Professional Release Candidate 1, the first operating system to have native Syriac support. The importance which the Assyrian community attaches to the work of Dr. Kiraz is indicated by the fact that he was one of the featured speakers in the session on language and the Internet presented at the AANF convention in 2000. His work has also been widely discussed on the various Assyrian forums, and a substantial sum of money has been raised in the Assyrian community to support Syriac computing.

Assyrian efforts to teach and maintain their language on the Internet now take many forms. There are Internet radio sites broadcasting news and music in Neo-Aramaic. Many sites have boxes whose labels may be switched to Neo-Aramaic by clicking on an icon. A search in July 2001 found eight sites providing language and literacy courses. One site provides a grammar of modern Assyrian written in Assyrian. Another site provides a dual language Assyrian/English corpus of Assyrian songs, with the Assyrian in transliteration. The expressed purpose of the

site is to expand the reader's vocabulary in the Assyrian language. A third site not only provides language lessons but also a moderated forum to discuss the history of the Aramaic dialects as well as their phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics. The weekly online magazine ZINDA offers a regular section devoted to expanding its readers' vocabulary in the mother tongue.

The Assyrian community has also been involved in projects to create on-line dictionaries. The Assyrian Academic Society of Chicago in cooperation with Tyler Chambers' Internet Dictionary Project has established a site (http://aas.net/id.htm) to create a royalty-free English-modern Assyrian dictionary through the help of Assyrians who have access to the Internet. The Syriac Computing Institute has begun a project to create an on-line Syriac-English/English-Syriac dictionary.

The Assyrian community has also been involved in making texts available on the Internet. At http://www.peshitta.org/ one may find the Peshitta Aramaic/English Interlinear New Testament. On July 15, 2001, Zinda Magazine [http://www.zindamagazine.com] and Beth Mardutho [http://www.bethmardutho.org] launched a joint fundraising campaign for a major project, eBethArké: The Syriac Digital Library. This project will bring to the Internet approximately 3,000 out-of-copyright books, journal articles, pictures, maps, and audio recordings.

Conclusion

The literature in the social sciences and the humanities is replete with statements underlining the importance of language in the formation and maintenance of ethnic identity. For the Assyrians, a small group many of whose members now live in diaspora in Australia, Europe and the Americas, language is central to the maintenance of a sense of community. In their Middle Eastern homeland where the Christian Assyrians are a very small minority in a mostly Moslem world, Christianity is perhaps their most salient characteristic. In diaspora in a mostly Christian world, it is their mother tongue which most clearly distinguishes them, a fact recognized both by Assyrian poets and by Assyrian activists.

In their struggle to ensure the survival of the Assyrian language and people, Assyrian activists have seized upon the Internet as a potent tool. To it they have brought their debates about ethnic group membership and ethnic group labels, etymologies, and the relationships among the languages and dialects which are their linguistic heritage. Even when they do not use Neo-Aramaic for the body of the texts they post as they debate and share information with one another through the Internet, Assyrians often make reference to their shared ethnicity by codeswitching, including Neo-Aramaic phrases in texts written primarily in other languages. They have developed Internet radio sites broadcasting in Neo-Aramaic and sites to teach Neo-Aramaic and Classical Syriac. Their efforts at language maintenance also include Internet publication of dictionaries and books and articles in and about Neo-Aramaic and Classical Syriac. Clearly the Assyrians are mounting an aggressive campaign to exploit the advantages of the Internet in their battle to preserve their linguistic heritage.

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Frisian all over the World
the unique experience of one year
www.omropfryslan.nl

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Abstract

The only professional Frisian news site www.omropfryslan.nl attracted 8,9 million hits in the first years of its existence. Frisian is spoken in Friesland, in the north of the Netherlands. The web site is an activity of Frisian public broadcaster Omrop Fryslân, which considers the Internet as its third outlet after radio and television. Until now Omrop Fryslân does not enjoy any financial support yet for their web site, which might become a problem in the long run.

The website is updated seven days a week. One out of every four visitors is a Frisian living outside the Netherlands. The experience shows that the Internet is particularly suitable for media in endangered languages, which often lack resources for daily or even weekly papers on print. Omrop Fryslân considers its website as the first Frisian language daily on the Internet. The website carries thousands of links, Frisian radio on demand and an English section for international visitors.

In recent year smaller European languages seem to do relatively well on the Internet. According to a recent scientific research Frisian should be the 44th language on the Internet. Related to the number of speakers Icelandic is the first language on the Internet.

Introduction

It is not without some humble pride that I present the account of the development of www.omropfryslan.nl, the only professional news site in the Frisian language. I say 'humble pride', because we are still working at our goal and that is to become a truly multimedia website, serving Friesland and Frisians all over the world as one of their main portals. Our website is young, having come on line in July 2000. We are special, because we are the one and only professional news site in the Frisian language. The site is updated seven days a week, more or less on an hourly basis. Apart from Frisian we also provide basic information in English. We do not provide news in Dutch.

Our relative success, the stream of e-mails from all continents and the growing number of visitors show that it is possible to run a professional website in a so-called lesser used or minority language. In the first year of our existence www.omropfryslan.nl already attracted 8.900.742 hits, which is not bad for a website in a language spoken by approximately 500.000 people. How this happened I am going to tell you now. An important part of the answer is that our site *sucks* according to the Dutch Internet critic Peter Olsthoorn. (De Journalist, 2000). In order to avoid misunderstandings: Olsthoorn meant this verdict as a compliment. In his view a professional website should *suck* visitors by being topical, interactive, surprising and constantly moving.

We seem to succeed to some extent by offering news combined with specific information our public apparently appreciates varying from language news – for instance on the Frisian minorities in Germany – to all results of the important Frisian handball match the *PC* in August. We intensively covered totally different events such as Friesland's largest rock festival *Wâldrock* and the traditional Frisian booting competition *Skûtsjesilen*. An internal statistics program helps us to keep track of how often the various parts of our website are visited. But it certainly is not just numbers that matter; we also do projects, which attract smaller numbers.

Bitterswiet is an example. Bitterswiet is a Frisian poem, which has been translated in over 80 languages on the occasion of the European Year of Languages. Poetry lovers appreciate the project, but it attracts less visitors that the *SC Heerenveen Champions League Football Pool* we did last year.

Being in Agadir in Africa, relatively far from home, I should explain a little about Frisian and Friesland. Frisian or *Frysk* as we call the language ourselves, is a Germanic language. Of all living languages of the world Frisian has the closest linguistic-historical links to old English, and therefore attracts a growing scientific interest at universities in, for instance, Austria, the Czech republic, England, Germany, Japan and the United States.

If you allow me I will just give a few examples: cheese is *tsiis* in Frisian, sheep is *skiep (plural: skiep)*, and you is in Frisian either *Jo* or *Do (cf. thou). (Boelens, 1987).*

Since 1951, almost 50 years ago, Frisian enjoys official recognition as the official second language of the Dutch state. (Boomsma, 1998) This will be the cause of a larger celebration in a few weeks time. Friesland – the official name of the province is *Fryslân* in Frisian – is one of the 12 provinces of the Kingdom of the Netherlands *(Royaume des Pays-Bas)*. The outside world often refers to the state I live in as *'Holland'*, which is a geographical and historical mistake. 'Holland' is just two of the 12 provinces of the Netherlands. A conscious Frisian accepts to be part of the Netherlands but rejects the idea of being

part of Holland, like the refusal of a Scotsman to be part of 'England'.

Now I will tell you about the state of the Frisian language. In Friesland we have well over 600.000 inhabitants. 94 % of them understand Frisian, 73 % of the population is able to speak the language, but only 17 % of the population is able to write Frisian. 54 % of the Frisians consider Frisian as their first language (mother tongue). During the last decades these figures have shown remarkable stability. The language does not seem to lose much ground anymore. At the same time the situation of the language in our society has changed quite a bit; 30 years ago the countryside was considered as predominantly Frisian-speaking, the cities as Dutch speaking or *urban Frisian* speaking, the latter being a mixture of Frisian and Dutch. (Gorter, 1984, Van Langevelde 1999)

Nowadays we have more Frisian speakers in our capital *Ljouwert/Leeuwarden* and other towns, and more Dutch speakers in our villages. The status of the language has improved a great deal. Frisian has become an obligatory subject at both primary (1980) and secondary schools (1995) and we have daily Frisian radio broadcasts – from 6 AM till 11 PM – and, a daily hour of Frisian television and, and now I come to the subject of my lecture, Frisian on the Internet. Frisian is not doing well in all domains; at present there is no newspaper or weekly press in the Frisian language.

Internet: suitable for endangered languages

The Internet is a very suitable medium for an endangered Language. If the site is good it is easy to find a public any place, any time. No printing costs, relatively modest investments, no distributing problems. All over Europe minority language media and organizations are well aware of this. Only a few weeks ago the German linguist Stefan Langer published his study *Sprachen auf dem www* (Langer, 2001). According to his data the large minority language Catalan is the 19th language on the web, Basque is 36th, Galician 40th, Welsh 41st, Faroyar 43rd and Frisian 44th. English is first, for obvious reasons.

But if you relate this ranking to the number of speakers English is not the first but the 10th language on the web. Icelandic comes first, followed by Swedish, Finnish, Norwegian and Danish. In this list Catalan is 15th, Basque 16th, Galician 18th, Welsh 29th and Frisian 40th. According to Langer's findings the linguistic variety on the Internet is growing rapidly, and the share of English is declining. Langer already noticed a fair amount of Breton and Irish and many other languages, which should be included in further research.

www.omropfryslan.nl promotes itself as a website carrying news, culture and topical images. And as such we have registered ourselves with *meta tags* at search engines such as Altavista, Google or Yahoo. Furthermore we offer a growing number (at this stage a few thousand) of links to emphasize our ambition to develop ourselves as a portal. It is obvious that we offer information on all our programmes and information on all activities of Omrop Fryslân. On the Internet we try to do this as interactively as possible.

In this paper I would like to describe and show www.omropfryslan.nl We manage the site with a tool called *cast manage*, which saves us the trouble of working in *html*. Like most Internet managing systems it looks like a large tree with lots of larger and smaller branches.

New media staff

In order to make possible the starting up of www.omropfryslan.nl on 30 June 2000 – which was one day before the start of the Simmer 2000 Festival, the big Millennium reunion of Frisians all over the world – Omrop Fryslân formed a small editorial staff for the so-called 'new media'. This group consists of the 'old' Text-TV staff– consisting of four part-time journalists – and myself. I started a few weeks beforehand as the first – and until now the only – full-time Internet journalist. My assignment is to create and expand our website, which is obviously an ever ongoing task. To cope with the growing workload we appointed several extra free-lance Internet journalists since. The systems for Internet and Text-TV – which is written news on our Television channel - have been partly integrated. News written for Text-TV can be copied for the Internet with one push on a radio button.

Vital, of course, is the presence of our two webmasters who dedicate 50 per cent of their time to our website and the other half to graphic design for all departments of Omrop Fryslân. They also have free-lancers to replace them or help them out in busy times.

Our CEO Pim Gaanderse recently described the Internet as a 'serious third department' of our public broadcasting organization. In order to develop and expand www.omropfryslan.nl as one of the foremost and most popular and visited websites in the Frisian languages we have asked the provincial government to subsidise us with 1 Million Guilders (450.000 Euro) a year. Whether or not we will get that much remains to be seen, but the Frisian regional Minister for Culture, Bertus Mulder has complimented us on several occasions, so there are grounds for being hopeful of some financial aid from the Provinsje Fryslân.

For our perspective in the long run this is very important. National public broadcasting organisations get support from the government for their web sites, we still have to do without. If one takes into consideration that Frisian is the second official language of the Netherlands, with a guarantee for the presence of our language in the media, this situation is unjust and slightly discriminatory. We therefore regularly demand the Province Friesland and the Dutch state to support us.

The fact that national public broadcasters receive money for this purpose while the only Frisian news site is overlooked illustrates our position in Dutch broadcasting. Omrop Fryslân is the only broadcasting organisation which broadcasts in Frisian, but we are regarded and treated as just as one of the 13 Dutch-language regional broadcasters. This is important because regional

broadcasters receive less money for radio and TV-programmes than broadcasters at the national level.

Because of the Frisian language we receive additional funding for educational radio and TV-programmes and for a weekly programme on the national network, but not yet for our web site. This situation is somewhat familiar. When Omrop Fryslân started a daily television service in 1994, there was only money available for an experimental period. (Falkena, 1995) The Secretary of State for culture and the Media Committee in the Dutch Parliament 'saved' us two years later, when we were already facing serious financial problems.

With the Internet it looks like history is repeating itself. We have to prove ourselves before we get some kind of financial support and we are still not a top priority of the Secretary of State for Culture. I certainly hope that it will not be necessary to face another financial crisis in order to get some support.

At present Omrop Fryslân employs over 100 people. In the past year at least 18 people have been actively involved in work for www.omropfryslan.nl Without some kind of financial backup the lack of structural subsidy might become a problem in the future.

Target Groups

One major target group for our website is teenagers and young people. In Europe today's children are very much used to having access to the Internet at home, at school and in the library. Sometimes it is even easier to reach them on the Internet than with radio or newspapers. I know Frisian children – my own daughter is an example – who seldom listen to Omrop Fryslân, but they check our website, certainly if it carries information on popular musicians such as Twarres. (*Twarres scored a number one hit in both the Netherlands and Belgium with their Frisian love song 'Wêr Bisto' in the autumn of 2000.)* I would like to note that the majority of our radio audience is well over 50 years of age, whereas our website www.omropfryslan.nl has few visitors of this age group. Our regular visitors are either in their thirties or younger, which is another proof of the strategic value of a professional website for a broadcasting organisation.

Another group to whom our presence on the web is important is Frisians living outside Fryslân in the Netherlands and in the USA, South Africa, Canada and elsewhere. Many people emigrated during the fifties, but I am also referring to Frisians who emigrated in recent years, such as young farmers leaving for Denmark or Texas. It is quite attractive for them to listen to the Frisian radio on the Internet, once in a while, and to keep in touch with the Frisian news by visiting our website. We get daily requests by Frisians outside Friesland to put all our radio broadcasts streaming on line. This is particularly attractive for Frisians in America, who are often able to surf the Internet for free.

We also cater for people looking for relevant information on Friesland – this corresponds to our portal function.

Professional Internet users such as the newsrooms of national television and regional newspapers make use of the site as well. Even the BBC occasionally uses and values www.omropfryslan.nl as a source of information.

The number of people using the Internet in Fryslân is growing rapidly and in a short time has gone from 30 per cent to well over 50 per cent. It is likely that in a few years time the Internet will be considered as a basic requirement like a refrigerator or a television set, as is already the case in the United States.

Features of the Site

We have a number of unique selling points (USP). The Frisian language itself, combined with a fresh outlook and lots of topical images is one of these. There are dozens of news sites to be found in the Dutch language, but only one in the Frisian language. What could have been feared to be a disadvantage – a barrier for those who are not able to read Frisian without difficulty - has proven to be an asset. It is also the most natural thing in the world for us; Omrop Fryslân broadcasts in Frisian so writing Dutch would not have been logical and our regular audience would not have accepted it. And then even if we wanted to we lack staff and resources to translate everything we write into various languages. In the first months of our existence we have had a few odd protests against our language policy (De Journalist, 2001).

On the other hand we often receive e-mails from people, who apologize for writing us in Dutch, but who ask us to carry on in Frisian. Besides, Frisian is not that difficult for speakers of a Germanic language. It is, in fact, quite close to English. An advantage for international users is the fact that basic information as well as a limited number of news stories is made available in English. We included this feature due to the continuous international appeal of our website.

Daily topical images are placed on the site to illustrate the news stories and the site is updated every day of the week, including Saturdays and Sundays. We work off-line and the site gets an hourly update automatically. In our news section we regularly pay attention to news on minority languages elsewhere in Europe. The section regularly carries news about the small Frisian minorities in Germany. On the request of a North Frisian voluntary radio association we have put one of their reports on our website.

Other features include radio on demand, which is obviously very important. The capacity of our connection is still quite limited. For this reason we only offer current affairs programs and sports news on the website. Live football matches still have to wait. On the request of the North Frisian voluntary radio association we have put one of their reports on our website as well.

The site also provides a fair amount of interactivity, which is a vital feature and varies from a children's game to the option of asking for certain records by means of Internet forms or taking part in competitions such as a temporary football pool. Our guest book has hundreds of messages and, of course a great number of e-mails are received. We try to answer them all, if possible, within

48 hours. The section 'Now on your radio/TV-set' shows you what is currently being broadcast and is kept up to date by the secretary of our editorial staff. If there is more information on a certain programme – and often there is such information – you will find a direct link to the web page of the programme concerned. All in all there are already hundreds of pages available with information varying from recipes, which have been broadcast on the radio to linguistic tips.

Surfers love the *ferwizings/links* section. We offer over two thousand relevant links, and I know of various local politicians who have already installed our website as their starting page. Visible on all pages of the site we have the news headlines. The homepage changes daily, and always carries a topical news item. With our news we also provide links to the original source, which varies from the original letter of our minister of agriculture to Parliament to an interesting court verdict. Every week we produce and make an Interview or reports on Internet topics on air, which is of course linked to the website. Radio and Internet intertwined, the two media strengthen one another.

Radio and Internet is yet a far better combination than television and Internet. One can easily surf and listen at once. Television is more of a hassle and still takes too many bytes for many older computers to be enjoyable. In the Netherlands in recent years the amount of time devoted to television has declined because of the growing interest for the Internet. Radio is making a kind of come back, partly because of the Internet.

Internet also offerspossibilities to distribute longer texts on the website. One should be cautious to do so, because many surfers disapprove of lengthy texts, but one can offer longer texts as an option. The Frisian Youth magazine *Linkk*, which is linked to the TV-program Linkk is a good example. For endangered languages publishing on the Internet can be particularly interesting, because it saves relatively expansive printing and distributing activities. And in most Western European countries, all schools have access to the Internet.

And then we carry general information on Omrop Fryslân, advertising department ORF (Omrop Reklame Fryslân) and the Freonen (Friends) of Omrop Fryslân. An archive containing all news items since our start is available on-line; experienced surfers appreciate this a lot. We also have a youth section carrying links to youth-programs and the special events.

We carry a limited number of advertisements through banners with a direct link to the site of the company involved.

Response To Date

To be precise our Internet statistics counted, to be precise, 8.9 million hits by June 30, which is exactly one year after the day we started. Hits are not a very accurate measurement of the use made of the site, of course. One regular visitor may cause dozens or even a few hundred hits. Therefore we also count the number of daily original visitors staying with us for at least 10 minutes, which is a long time to stay at one site on the Internet. In January this year we had some 600 hundred of them, and often they use www.omropfryslan.nl to listen to our radio news at the time and place of their choice.

Our best month ever was April this year. Foot-and-mouth disease broke out in Friesland, and in one month our website attracted 2.4 Millions of hits of people looking for news updates. Apart from the news we tried to serve them with a specific *dossier*, carrying dozens of Foot- and Mouth links, a Foot- and Mouth news archive, maps of the area affected and a list of cancelled events

Our statistics show a gradual but stable growth with some ups and downs. Links to our site at interesting places such as www.omroep.nl (the site of the Dutch public broadcasting body) or www.twarres.net (the website of a popular band) are most helpful.

Our statistics also give information on the country our visitors live in: two thirds of our hits come from within the Netherlands, America is second, and then you will find countries such as Canada, the UK, Belgium and Germany.

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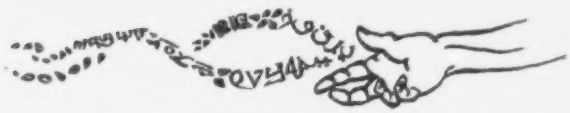

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Open Forum:

Some Briefer Thoughts

Television News Bulletins in Forest Nenets

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Forest Nenets is a language spoken by approximately 1,500 people in and around the Pur County of the Yamal Nenets District in north-western Siberia. In spite of the small population and widespread bilingualism in Russian, the level of language maintenance is reasonably high (Salminen 2001). There are many younger people who prefer Russian, but a number of children continue to grow fluent in the native language, largely because the Forest Nenets tend to prefer their traditional way of life rather than assimilate to Russian mainstream society.

The Forest Nenets culture is almost totally oral, and folklore in the form of songs and stories is well preserved and highly valued by all generations. The first attempts to write Forest Nenets for practical purposes took place in the early 1990s, but up till today, writing plays only a marginal role in the Forest Nenets culture (Salminen 2000).

The Forest Nenets language does not therefore appear in printed media, but for such a small indigenous community, its presence in local radio and television is notable. Radio broadcasts in Forest Nenets have taken place since the late Soviet days, while Forest Nenets television dates back to less than a decade ago.

The Forest Nenets country is rich in oil deposits that are exploited extensively and often destructively. On the other hand, the oil industry brings in money, most of which goes to the hands of Russian incomers, but small sums are also spent for purposes important to the indigenous community. For one thing, the Pur County television company has produced and broadcast a number of programmes in Forest Nenets in recent years, including short documentary films and, notably, a series of news bulletins with a broad coverage of current affairs.

A typical Forest Nenets news bulletin covers half a dozen topics within a total running-time of 30 minutes. As a rule, each of the topics is introduced by the Forest Nenets journalist employed by the television company, Ms. Larisa Aivasedo, who also takes care of most of the subsequent interviews or reports. Probably the largest number of the stories are devoted to social, economic, and political affairs of concern to the indigenous population of the county, but various cultural activities and features of traditional lifestyle are also widely covered. Practically all footage comes from within the county, in other words, outsiders are interviewed or outside happenings are discussed only when somebody is visiting the county.

Tarko-Sale, the adminitrative centre of the Pur County, is also where the television company has its studio, and, for understandable reasons, most of the productions take place there as well. Every now and then, the news bulletin crew travels to other parts of the county, including areas where the Forest Nenets practise their traditional nomadic way of life, and the results of these field trips are then broadcast in many news bulletins and other programmes over a lengthy period of time. Needless to say, stories focused on real forest life are much appreciated by the viewers, while interviews with social workers, business and administration people, and political figures are generally perceived as less engaging.

In the Pur County, television programmes are only available in settlements founded and inhabited by Russians, which excludes the bulk of the Forest Nenets people from their permanent audience. Nevertheless, most of those Forest Nenets who have moved to Russian neighbourhood are faithful viewers of the programmes in the native language, and many people whose home is in the forest regularly come to Tarko-Sale and other towns to visit their settled relatives or handle business and official transactions, which allows them to catch up with the latest features of television broadcasts.

A natural characteristic of the Forest Nenets news bulletins is that they are bilingual without subtitles. This means that all introductions, reportages and interviews with Forest Nenets speakers appear solely in Forest Nenets, while interviews with other people, including speakers of the closely related but unintelligible Tundra Nenets, are carried out in Russian. The lack of Forest Nenets subtitles is expected, of course, there being no tradition of writing in the language and the viewers being fluent in both languages. The lack of Russian translations emphasizes the position of the Forest Nenets as the one and only target group of the programmes.

The news bulletins are usually well received by the Forest Nenets audience, and their contents are regarded as useful and informative. When it comes to politically sensitive issues, which are many in the area, the bulletins have usually taken an open approach, airing critical views of the Forest Nenets public as well as statements by the local establishment. Until recently, the cooperation of different interest groups has been remarkably smooth, and this has been reflected in the relative freedom of local mass media, a situation far from typical in Russian provinces.

Recently, however, the leadership of the Pur County was taken over by one Mr. Myl'nikov who has expressed views that are much less favourable towards the indigenous community than those of his predecessor. His main concern is with the expenses caused by the Forest

Nenets way of life, for instance, helicopter transportation of their children to and from boarding schools at the beginning and end of terms. But more worryingly, he does not seem to be free from chauvinistic attitudes that, if taken to extremes, would deny the right of a small minority group to any culture markedly different from that of mainstream society. Sadly, he really seems to have a number of truly extremist views, as he openly suggested in a Norwegian-made documentary film that the whole Forest Nenets nation should be translocated to new concrete suburbs so that they could finally achieve equal status with other citizens. That this would mean an end to the Forest Nenets language and culture appeared to be of little concern to him, quite on the contrary, he strongly advocated the path of quick assimilation to Russian society as the one and only suitable future option for the Forest Nenets and other indigenous peoples.

The Forest Nenets people are quite unanimously against any attempts to interfere with their way of life, and they have clearly shown that they have the inner potential that is called for in coping with the demands of the modern world, as long as they are allowed to take care of their own affairs. However, since the Forest Nenets community is small and lacks all political power, and because the Russian rulers appear increasingly reluctant to let them continue living according their traditions, their culture and language remain vulnerable and truly endangered.

Television is generally felt as an appropriate medium for the Forest Nenets because it fits in well with their oral tradition. Radio broadcasting, while in many ways more important and efficient because of its availability across the vast forests, lacks the immediate symbolic value of having television programmes in the native language. At the same time, the news bulletins and other programmes in Forest Nenets have a highly informative function which makes it impossible to relegate them to the status of mere curiosities.

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Nyae Nyae revisited:
the "Village Schools Project" in North-Eastern Namibia

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At the FEL conferencein Maynooth in 1999, Joe Pfaffe reported on the start-up phase of the Village Schools Project (VSP), a donor-funded program for Ju/'hoan learners set up in 1992 in the area of Tsumkwe Constituency East, formerly also known as "Eastern Bushmanland" (north-eastern Namibia), it is the only educational environment where mother-tongue instruction in Ju/'hoan language is currently carried out. The Ju/'hoansi of the Ju/'hoan Traditional Authority in Nyae Nyae, are, with about 3,000 community members, one of the largest San communities in Southern Africa. Since the VSP is also facilitating the training of Ju/'hoan teachers, it has been a major player in the development of the existing teaching and learning environment for the Ju/'hoan communities in Namibia.

In 1994, a comprehensive aid program had been initiated to redress the marginalisation and increasing poverty of an illiterate people whose very culture and language, spoken by fewer than 2000 people, was endangered by the encroaching modern world. The programs were carefully designed to empower the people through enabling the development of a political voice, an economic platform and a strong sense of cultural identity.

Seven years on, in May/June 2001, both authors went back to examine the evolution and current state of the culture in the context of the now long running initiatives. We have collaborated in writing a photo story aiming at a larger audience, especially addressing the non-scientific reader. The immediate ambition is to publish a coffee-table format book which presents the modern life situation of the Ju/'hoansi, including the impact of (mother-tongue) education within a context of school and community. If successful, further publications on other minority languages could follow.

While visiting Nyae Nyae, it became obvious that the community situation had changed drastically from the early phases of the VSP in 1998. Although the VSP is still operating, "Nyae Nyae 2001" is characterizedby an atmosphere of growing frustration and loss of motivation on all sides. Since the VSP is integral part of a community context, and even largely managed by both an NGO (the Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia) and a local grassroots organization (the Nyae Nyae Conservancy), it is also susceptible to weaknesses that might have their cause within the Management structure of such organisations. Although it was originally intended to present the San communities as a highly innovative culture from which other indigenous cultures could also benefit, the direction has now shifted towards a much more critical view of (failed) development work, its causes and its consequences, also regarding mother-tongue education.

The presentation will report on the visit to Nyae Nyae and will show a number of exciting photographs which will highlight central problem areas and challenges.

Is language shift to English imminent amongst the young mother-tongue Afrikaans-speakers of the Rehoboth Gebiet?

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The object of this contribution is to introduce two invisible Namibian entities: the Afrikaans language and the Rehoboth Basters.

The Basters were the very people who brought the Afrikaans language to Namibia in 1870. As speech community of some 90 families they were the main force in establishing Afrikaans in the country. Why Afrikaans and the Basters are both regarded as invisible by this contributor, will be made clear in the presentation. With the help of a video both will however be made visible to the conference-goers albeit for a short eight minutes. First, though, Namibia will be pinpointed on the map. Some sentences on the history of Afrikaans and the Basters of the Rehoboth Gebiet in Namibia will follow.

An Afrikaans-speaking Namibian's reasons for attending a conferenceon Endangered Languages and the Media will become clear from the following quotes:

Executive Director Phil ya Nangoloh, National Society for Human Rights (1995:1):

> "in practice the state of human rights of several of Namibias indigenous ethnic minority groups could be described as precarious Special consideration is given to four most vulnerable groups of persons belonging to national, ethnic and linguistic minorities in Namibia: the Rehoboth Basters, the ovaHimba people, the San communities and the Topnaars, whose culture, tradition and customs and even physical survival as distinct ethnic groups are under potential threat due to economic, social and political marginalization"

From the Namibia Human Rights Report 2001:

> "On March 28, 2001, a bitter President Nujoma ordered Namibian schools to stop teaching Afrikaans."

In terms of Article 3 of the Constitution any language may be used as medium of instruction in the country's schools. (p. 60)

President Nujoma:

> "I hereby instruct with immediate effect from May 31 2001 the purchase of *The Namibian* with state monies must be ceased forthwith."

citing the paper's "anti-Government stance" as the reason.

The directive came five months after the Cabinet ban on all Government advertising in the said newspaper. (p. 72)

The Basters of the Rehoboth Gebiet, through their Captain, complained to the United Nations Human Rights Committee (as part of a complaint about communal land) that the Namibian Government discriminated against their mother tongue Afrikaans. This resulted in the following finding (25 July 2000):

> "The Human Rights Committee acting under article 5, paragraph 4, of the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political rights, is of the view that the facts before it discloses a violation of article 26 of the Covenant the State party is under the obligation to provide the authors (the Captain of the Rehoboth Basters, et al) and the other members of their community an effective remedy by allowing its officials to respond in other languages than the official one in a nondiscriminatory manner. The State party is under obligation to ensure that similar violations do not occur in the future."

This Namibian contribution (Afrikaans and the Basters) will end with a short discussion on the above. How did the Namibian Government react? In which way was it reported in the local media? Are the Basters aware of this finding? Was the language, the legal language as well as the English language, ever understood by the suffering party?

Funding a Public Access TV Program for 'Ethnic Diversity' in the USA: wasting time in fruitless pursuit of non-existent help

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Introduction

Is the emigrant community of Imazighen in the US better served by media in their new country than they were in their old home? The answer is not difficult to elaborate: it can be resumed in a single word: no.

First, let me introduce myself briefly. I was born and raised in Morocco, and my combined ancestry is Catalan and Amazigh. I came to the United States as a foreign student in 1960, and have lived and worked in California since then. I have over forty years' experience of activism on issues of Human Rights, women's rights, and indigenous rights, both American Indian and Amazigh.

My skills at video and television production were fostered and nurtured by my American Indian Lakota friends on Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, in South Dakota, who first put a professional video camera in my hands, and launched me in the career of video documentation. Later, it was again American Indian friends in Marin County, California, who asked me to do a televised documentary on their community. This was in 1993. The situation, then, slightly improved today, was that images and viewpoints of American Indians were rarely part of mainstream television and film production. American Indians, in the end, had to resort to the creation of their own television network. They remain today the "invisible" minority in the United States.

Eight years later, over forty programs later, and certified as Public Access Producer with Cable Television networks, TCI in Northern California, and Adelphia Communications in southern California, I have consistently found no support among public and private foundations for this work.

All the work of the past eight years as the director of Tazzla Institute for Cultural Diversity, a publicly-supported non-profit organization with tax exempt status, has been maintained by small private donations on the part of family, friends and supporters, and through garage sales, or other such means.

The concern is most certainly that there is little interest in the United States for independent television production on the Amazigh people, culture, or Human rights issues.

Ethnic Diversity in the US: "Needs" as Conceived

The foreign-born population of the USA is expected to grow to more than 31 million in the year 2010. In perusing articles and presentations on the topic of media representation of this ethnic diversity, one finds very different viewpoints. Let us examine briefly the various publicly-oriented TV services in the USA (including Public Access), and their funding priorities for ethnic diversity in programming.

The Public Broadcasting System

PBS was created in 1969. It has led the way in diversifying the content of the television diet in the US, overall frighteningly bland. Its association with BBC and the presentation of major BBC theatrical production, special documentaries, and even comedy series, has been extremely valuable, but is now almost considered as reaching "a graying audience." None the less, PBS is now a pioneer in digital technology. PBS depends on Federal Government funds for 15% of its budget, and its main source of additional revenues has been and remains corporate sponsorship. In that regard, it is very similar to other major television networks.

In order to present a documentary on PBS, you must raise millions of dollars, a feat demanding enormous capacities forfund-raising.

Public Television

There are new developments in this area. For instance, we can cite the existence of EABC, Ethnic American Broadcasting Company that addresses the production and distribution of multi-ethnic programming. This concern, for example, refutes the following mainstream comment by Lucia Ballas-Traynor (Galavision): "Once you decide to uproot your family and transplant them, your whole value system changes; content relevant back in the home country is no longer relevant here in the US."

The philosophy of EABC is that, on the contrary, "the rapid growth of our subscriber base points to one simple fact: Americans of foreign ancestry want to watch programs from their homelands."

Unfortunately, EABC, which airs programs in Hindu, Arabic, Greek, or Spanish, has not yet considered

Amazigh as having enough weight in America. The same concerns can be advanced when it comes to the very effective ITVS, Independent Television Services, which fosters the work of community producers and independent production. They draw a blank when it comes to "Amazigh" topics.

Public Access Television

Finally, there are Independent Television Producers like me who are able to create alternative television on a low budget through Public Access television.

Public Access, or Community Service television as it is also called in some areas, is the fastest growing segment of the television industry in America. FCC (Federal Communication Code) regulations guaranteed this affordable popular access to the "Information Superhighway," for low income and rural America in particular. The 1992 Cable Act required that the FFC create regulations to define what public-interest obligations the cable industry must meet. There was in general a requirement for them to set aside a portion of their channel capacity for low-cost access by non-commercial, educational and informational programming. These regulations have provided the opportunity for new voices to have access to a national multi-channel video service that is growing by leaps and bounds.

Thus, I was trained in the use of television facilities completely free of charge, and certified to use television equipment made available to me completely free of charge. I was then able to produce certain programs on a very low budget. However, because this avenue is made available, no funding institution will consider that a Public Access production really needs money: therefore, the cost of buying tapes, reproduction and distribution become a matter of further waste of time when approaching public and private foundations for help. I have spent countless hours writing letters of enquiry, if not full proposals with costly samples of my work, only to receive the same response, again and again, wishing me the best of luck in my very worthy enterprise, congratulating me on the high worth of my goals, but declaring that no funds are available for Amazigh programming or cultural documentation.

Actual US Priorities for Funding

The funds for cultural diversity go to American Indians in a few cases, but mostly to Hispanic, Black Americans, Asian Americans and to Gay and Lesbian community Outreach programs. Imazighen are too much of an unknown factor to risk those few much-coveted funds in America.

A parallel can once more be drawn with other nation states and their indigenous populations. If certain minorities are not visible, there are political reasons. The presence of a "sub-stratum" of aboriginal people in America remains in the background of the collective American social consciousness, and as a rule, Americans do not like their own myth challenged by a different version of history.

The Use of Different Media in Reversing Language Shift: Nahua Illustrations

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Most of the world's languages are facing the threat of extinction. This is especially true in large, multinational states such as Mexico and the U.S., where efforts in the field of language revitalization, maintenance or development are relatively new. The tragedy and the irony of the situation is that North America is also the site of the greatest concentration of technology advances in the world, advances that could be marshaled to arrest and even reverse these trends. Notwithstanding such a common situation, there are few, if any high-tech efforts in the field, especially in the so-called under-developed countries. In this presentation I consider how to devise pilot efforts that will make a productive use of different media that would enhance the use of indigenous languages. The analysis of the potential and actual use of different technologies for linguistic and cultural survival prove of particular value to encourage educators to develop appropriate materials sensitive to different contexts. Our aim is that this presentation will inspire fruitful, long-term utilization of different media that would lead to language revitalization and reversal in different settings. For this purpose, I will review an ongoing project on Nahuatl cultural and linguistic revitalization recovering audio, video and written media, along with a culturally tailored 'from the bottom up', co-participatory model involving Nahua people themselves.

Geographic Center for Interactive Interdisciplinary Information

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GIS (Geographic Information Services) present information on maps in ways that allow for the cartographic indexing of world wide data. GeoCIII™ provides GloDex™ (Global Indexing Services) to link data from research in many fields to the locations on the globe where they occur.

The first projects attempt to document the relationships of small languages within their broader families. The Internet has become the medium of choice for rapid and exhaustive dissemination of information upon which social and political decisions are taken.

The use of Internet based GIS mapping technology in a data gathering and management role will provide an accessible database with interdisciplinary ramifications over historical and current socio-ecological relations. This is a clearinghouse function which relies on field research work prepared in a tabular format and held by our participants on server systems in the universities and research centers where they are working.

This convention offersa venue for presenting this project for your personal involvement. The need for participants from all areas of research which relate to cultural and environmental diversity is crucial to the database's utility. If it is to be useful to you, it will only be so as you support it by making your data available.

This is a non-profit activity but not an entirely free service. It is intended that a new level of membership be promoted in all organizations whose members support this service. A large amount of the data on file is intended to be free to all Internet users. Packaged groupings of the more advanced data held by organizations and their members will be offered for a block membership fee. This will provide an added source of revenue for the organization and a small service fee for the maintenance of the GloDex™ service.

The techniques of preparing, entering and editing research data will be the central topic of the presentation. Ancillary topics will include the development of organizational structures and financial processes for the management of the data provided by individual researchers and maintained by their parent organizations. Contractual rights and obligations as well as the disposition of data beyond the life of organizations and individuals will be discussed.

The essential questions of the broader dissemination of information and of service to the scientific, educational and public communities are the central concerns of GeoCIII™ in the development of this service.

6

Cementing the Community:

Media as Carriers of Minority Traditions

The New Vibrations of the Traditional teueikan: *Hearing the Sound of Our Own Voices on the* Kaiamiumishtuk *or the* Kitotakan.[1]

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Abstract

Native communities in Northern Quebec have been isolated from one another for many years. Even today, because of the distances which separate them, communications between various Indigenous groups have always been difficult. The inception of Native radio stations and of the SOCAM which offers a link between these various radio stations promotes the use of Native languages through news broadcasts and other programming, including community affairsand other subject matters, all in Native languages. Other programming is anticipated to promote the use and survival of Native languages among Aboriginal people residing within this large territory.

FADE IN: The case of Innu and Atikamekʷ languages

Historical background

Innu (also called Montagnais) and Atikamekʷ are recognised as being endangered languages. It is deplorable that even today, they are not in general usage among the Aboriginal people to whom they have been associated historically. This is due to pressure exerted on our people to fall in line with European ways and adopt the languages spoken by Europeans or Euro-Canadians established in Quebec. Pressure to abandon Native languages was exerted at differenttimes both by missionaries and by White governments. For example, as early as the seventeenth century, French missionaries imposed their language among the Native groups residing or visiting the northern coast of the St. Lawrence River of Quebec, groups they visited or resided among, and with groups with whom they had frequent contacts. Also, new technologies, even at this date, implied a transformation of Native languages to include new terms which did not exist in our own languages. More recently, schooling among the Native population has been in French or English depending on the region occupied by Innu and Atikamekʷ, in Quebec and Labrador. Of course, the situation as described above is not unique to the Natives identified here. In fact, other aboriginal groups throughout the world find themselves in similar situations, the differences being in the languages imposed on the Innu and Atikamekʷ at particular times and within the specific territories occupied by these First Nations' Peoples in Quebec and Labrador.

The present-day situation

Today, it is estimated that the Innu and Atikamekʷ languages will survive only if an all out effort is made to promote the use of these languages. This implies that early schooling must be conducted in these Native languages — some programmes having been implemented already with a high degree of success, but unfortunately children are only taught one hour a week in their own Native languages — but our languages must be used daily and by as many people conversant in Innu and Atikamekʷ, resulting in frequent usage, and one day perhaps, replacing Indo-European languages, used too frequently in daily activities and in formal and official communications between Native bands, and by necessity, with government officials to the South.

Furthermore, the population of Elders is reduced through natural deaths of the aged. At the same time, much of the vocabulary associated with traditional activities, such as hunting, fishing and gathering is at risk of being lost, since the Elders involved in these activities are disappearing, taking with them traditional nomadic ways of life, which today, have been reduced markedly through imposed settlement patterns by White governments, especially through the implementation of Native reserves. However, the SOCAM acts as a guardian and promoter of these complex languages and lifeways, by making every known information available to all its listening audience. In a manner of speaking, the SOCAM is the Keeper of these languages and lifeways. Traditionally, Innu and Atikamekʷ were transmitted solely by word of mouth, a tradition which is perpetuated and ensured by the network of Native

[1] The first Aboriginal word in the title of the present article stands for a traditional drum about which I will provide more details in the text which follows. Both *kaiamiumishtuk* and *kitotakan* signify radio set, the first is in Innu or Montagnais, the other is in Atikamekʷ. It is interesting to note that the Innu term for radio set actually translates as "the wood or the box which speaks"

radio stations which are regrouped under the SOCAM umbrella.

Innu and Atikamekʷ in perspective

FADE OUT: The impact of the SOCAM network on Innu and Atikamekʷ languages

What is the SOCAM?
Incorporated in 1983, SOCAM (Société de Communication Atikamekw-Montagnais) is a Native non-profit enterprise devoted to offer multiple radio network services in Native languages to Innu and Atikamekw people living in remote communities, the majority of which are located at considerable distances from largest basins of French and English populations.

The traditional drum called *teueikan*, is the symbol of our corporation. When heard on radio, its sound is easily recognised by many as an overture and a welcoming device to all First Nations' people who tune in to one of the 14 Native radio stations managed entirely, supported or sponsored in part through the efforts of the SOCAM. Like the vibrations of the voice of wisdom and the sound advice of the Elders, the *teueikan* has always been a powerful introduction and means of communication with the spiritual world and a formal device with which traditional culture has been transmitted from one generation to the next. Presently, the 14 radio stations which are regrouped under the umbrella of the SOCAM network are indeed a new and efficient way to communicate with all the communities concerned via satellite — and soon by Internet — providing a bridge between the communities which, until recently, were isolated from one another before the SOCAM was created and links were established between these communities (table 1)

Managed entirely by Indigenous People, the SOCAM has set up programming which aims principally at supporting and encouraging the daily use of our endangered languages. To this end, it has become important to produce many programmes at Native radio stations. On-site training of Aboriginals in various locations throughout the Canadian Northeast has been implemented with success, including training programmes for broadcasters, technicians and support staff, all keeping abreast of the latest developments and advances in radio broadcasting.

Atikamekʷ		
Haute-Mauricie(Quebec)		
Name of band	**Other name(s)**	**population**
Manawan	Manouane	1,620
Wemotaci	Weymontachie	1,080
Opiticiwan	Obedjiwan	1,780
Innu		
Lac Saint-Jean (Quebec)		
Mashteuiatsh	Pointe-Bleue, Piekuakamit	4,100
Côte-Nord (North coast of the St. Lawrence River)		
Essipit	Les Escoumins	370
Pessamit	Betsiamites	2,810
Uashat mak Mani-Utenam	Uashat (Sept-Îles), Maliotenam	2,810
Ekuantshit	Mingan	430
Basse Côte-Nord (Lower north coast, St Lawrence River)		
Nutashkuant	Natashquan, Nutukuan	710
Unamanshipit	La Romaine, Unamen Shipi	840
Pakua Shipi	Saint-Augustin	220
Nouveau-Québec (Northern Québec)		
Matimekush	Shefferville, Matimekosh	680
Labrador (Newfoundland)		
Sheshastit	Northwest River	920
Utshimashit	Davis Inlet	500
Total		18,870

Table 1. The SOCAM network and its partners.

Our varied and far-ranging programming includes interviews in the Innu and Atikamekʷ languages, where many topics and subjects are discussed or addressed, outlining current affairs and detailing varied aspects of our cultural traditions. Regularly scheduled programming aims to inform our people first-hand on several topics such as the negotiations of treaties, the signature of such agreements between Aboriginal people, the provincial and federal governments. Also, cultural events, traditional spirituality, folk medicine, health concerns, and

many other topics, even sport news are heard on the SOCAM airwaves. Furthermore, we translate and broadcast national and international news, bringing to light political decisions, proposed or enacted laws, as we outline and detail conflicts, negotiations and resolutions in current Native and world affairs. Our people have the right and certainly the need to be well informed regarding worldaffairs.

As mentioned previously, current events are outlined and detailed during our news broadcasts. Particular attention has been paid to avoid the usage of words from foreign languages. Instead, we prefer to adapt our own Native languages to explain political and daily events, and at times, this necessitates the creation of new Native words and expressions, which are created through consultation with the Language Committee of the ICEM, the Cultural and Educational Institute of Innus. In this way, not only do we keep our languages alive, but we also adapt their vocabulary to new situations by an ever-growing set of terms which are added to our Natives tongues. Language as culture is dynamic and is subject to modifications from time to time. Some terms are lost, but new terms are created. The SOCAM anticipates publishing a lexicon including this new terminology as adapted for use at all the radio stations it runs and supports. This project is being developed presently and is soon to be implemented.

Changes brought about by the SOCAM

Being the broadcast centre for five hours of daily programming heard in 14 community radio stations, the SOCAM is a powerful voice, and like the sound of the traditional *teueikan*, it informs and enables us to retrieve information at various levels through exchanges between the broadcasters and the listeners or participating audience, with an audience of nearly 19,000 Innu and Atikamek™ (table 1). Moreover, the SOCAM aims to share and accumulate information, knowledge important to First Nations in order to understand better what is at stake for the survival and healthy growth of Indigenous nations in today's world.

Facing a strong process of assimilation for centuries, our people took the decision to create the SOCAM as a permanent link between our Native communities. The process was initiated in the 1980's. Today, globalisation and mass media, including the control of news in print and on the air by large corporations, always aiming at standardisation are new perils facing First Nations especially since our languages are at risk of disappearing, I have already mentioned that there are about 19,000 Innu and Atikamek™ in the province of Quebec. We represent only 0.27% of a population of seven millions. Understandably we feel that we are being drowned out by these louder drums and voices. But at the SOCAM, because our commitment is to inform our people and help them to preserve our languages and traditional lifeways, we strongly believe that we can reduce the risks of seeing these languages disappear in time by reinforcing the value of these lifeways through the use of traditional language, at the same time, promoting new tools and technologies that will ensure the diffusion of our very own way to express ourselves and make our traditions known. Among these tools are our Native languages. One of the main goals of he SOCAM is to promote the use of Innu and Atikamek™ langauges among First Nations' members.

Innovations proposed by the SOCAM

In the late 1970's, CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) Cape Breton broadcasted a series of radio programmes which promoted the use of Gaelic, from English to Gaelic, followed by news and cultural event programming, also in Gaelic. It is proposed that similar programming would enable our people to improve their knowledge of their own Native languages, and for other Indigenous Peoples, perhaps the younger generation, to learn their ancestor's language, and even, introduce these languages to non-Natives speakers. A better understanding of Aboriginal culture, lifeways and traditions could only result from such an effort. It would also reveal to all people interested the complexity of Native cultures though the acquisition of a new language.

The learning process would include vocabulary acquisition through word association from French or English to Innu and Atikamek™, depending on the population to which the programming is addressed. Such courses would be at the foundation of the programme. Also, phrase construction, including grammar and semantics would provide examples as to how these Native words are used, always providing equivalents in French or English.

More advanced segments of the same course would include the utilisation of traditional and new words in story telling, the telling of traditional myths and the explanation of Native customs. Also, new words in the Innu and Atikamek™ vocabularies would be introduced to the listening audience through daily programming and through audience participation, as it has been recently, where listeners calling in to question broadcasters and language specialists were supplied with explanations as to the significance and use of these old and new words. After all, new Native words are often used in news broadcasts and require explanations as they are introduced. This aspect is particularly important, as it not only reinforces the use of Native languages to discuss traditional lifeways, but also makes the utilisation of these languages very current and necessary in everyday life, since daily events and politics are also discussed on the air. Also, inventing new terms to describe situations world-

wide, make these languages not only very current but also very dynamic, like other languages spoken throughout the world today. All languages evolve though time. As already mentioned, Native languages are not used only to describe traditional lifeways. They are also used at home in everyday situations by many Native people. Why not include them more frequently to discuss politics and current national and world affairs?

Finally, the introduction of such courses might interest people other than Indigenous Peoples, like individuals interested in acquiring a new language. Such persons as government representative from the administrative centres dealing in one way or another with First Nations on a regular basis and people who work frequently in Northern Quebec, mining and forestry, could be very interested in learning Native languages to communicate with various Aboriginal groups. Let's face it, for centuries, Europeans speaking different languages went through such a learning process to communicate with one another for various reasons. Why not do exactly the same to communicate with First Nations? Considering that the courses would be broadcasted on the air, the learning process would be made easier for all interested.

Results and future directions

Since the inception of the SOCAM, Indigenous people are generally more optimistic regarding the survival of the Innu and Atikamekw languages and broadcasting in Native languages has facilitated the use of our traditional languages. Cooperation between different bands has also permitted Native peoples to regroup and act as a larger community, instead of being isolated in marginalized smaller groups as we were in the past.

Also, one consideration which is of the outmost importance is the opportunity for Native people to communicate in their own languages. Naturally, it goes without saying that this brings great pride to all the members of First Nations involved in this innovative process. Let me emphasise that in all Indo-European cultures this is taken for granted. Its outmost importance cannot be realised until a language is at risk of being lost. It is a necessity for the perpetuation of Native cultures throughout the world. Therefore, communication in one's own language is primordial to all Native people. Language also reinforces group identity, enabling people from the same culture to interact, as it ensures growth and survival for any group facing assimilation.

Both at a regional level and throughout the entire network of the SOCAM and its partners, individuals can communicate with one another. For example, messages can be forwarded to family members and friends. Others will inquire about services offeredto Native people as a group and as individuals. Band administrators can also inform its members about decisions taken or to be made regarding the well-being of a band or another, decisions often requiring a feedback from the population. Therefore, it is easy to realise that the radio services offered by the SOCAM and its affiliates go much beyond the broadcasting of programmes of interest to Native people.

Through radio broadcasts, costs of keeping a language alive are reduced, since the airwaves reach many people. In fact, a recent pole conducted by the firm Léger & Léger shows that 85% of the potential listening audience over the age of 15 is reached in regions where our signal can be picked up. Doing the same thing through print and texts would be much more costly than through the associated Native radio stations. This is not to say that textbooks will not ever be printed, especially to supplement and complement radio programming to promote the learning and survival of our languages and peoples. As already noted, however, tuning in to our programming reaches many Native communities and in a way reduces isolation among our people. Language is one of the tools that enables traditions to survive within populations and it is passed on from one generation to the next. Without language the details of such traditions would only be too easily lost or transformed (Ember and Ember, 1990: 235-236). Also, language is an integral part of culture. If it is lost, it is very likely that the culture affected is doomed to disappear or to be transformed radically (Ember and Ember, 1990: 236). By promoting Native languages on our network of radio stations, these languages are promoted and used in all aspects of Native life, traditional and modern. Aboriginal cultures are therefore more likely to survive in this modern world where regrouping means survival.

Also, programming is constantly evolving. Radio is but one of the means to ensure the cohesion of Native languages and cultures. Constant improvements are being made to our programming to offer more services to all Native communities. Also, as noted above, it is hoped that the use of the Internet is soon to be implemented. Radio programmes will be heard on line in real-time, and can be rebroadcasted twenty-four hours a day. Pertinent and relevant information, regarding language and culture will be transmitted simultaneously along with the radio programming. Moreover, information regarding traditional activities and spirituality could be the subject of various web pages, and each community could make itself known through web pages of their own. Finally, the SOCAM also anticipates to create a television production centre, which would lead to a myriad of possibilities in communication among Native communities and can only facilitate the transmission and use of Native languages within the communities receiving this service by the APTN (the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network), at the

same time, supplementing and complementing the services offered to the Innu and Atikamekw from the SOCAM and its partners in the Canadian Northeast.

Today, the SOCAM promotes the use of the Innu and Atikamekw languages through its network of affiliates. We feel that we have made much progress since the seed was planted by the *Conseil Atikamekw-Montagnais* which, unfortunately, was dissolved in 1994. Also, First Nations' leaders and community members always supported and strongly encouraged our efforts to promote and use Native languages on the air. Furthermore, the continual and precious backing of the Assembly of First Nations of Canada, both at the regional and national levels, the *Conseil de la Nation Atikamekw* and the *Institut Educatif Culturel Montagnais* must be acknowledged.
Finally, we must recognise and applaud the support provided by the Quebec provincial and the Canadian federal governments who came to the realisation that our languages and cultures were being lost, and that the steps we proposed to slow down, and eventually stop, this process deserved the outmost consideration as well as their moral and financial support.

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Basque, the Internet, and New Language Policies

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Abstract

In the last twenty years the Basque Government has proposed a number of policies in order to reverse the language shift that has been gradually taking place. After a careful review of the efforts being made, it is clear that new policies have to be implemented in order to answer the new challenges that the Internet poses. The latest statistical data has shown that the number of people who have access to the Internet in the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country is very low. Moreover, there is a scarcity of Basque Web sites and, when Basques engage in forums or chatrooms, Basque is not the language preferred. In a parallel fashion to the efforts that the Basque community has made to create a Basque editorial world, the Basque language will have to start to emerge in this new environment. Although it seems unlikely that the electronic medium will replace print, the responsibility of the normalization of the Basque language will have to keep an eye on this new environment, where a great number of exchanges will take place in the years to come.

Reversing the language shift: historical background

The survival of the Basque language at the beginning of the new millennium is a surprising phenomenon that defies any sensible explanation. The leader for the standardization of Basque, Luis Michelena (1982: 55-56) observed that, according to any reasonable estimate, the Basque language should have died long ago. More specifically, he mentions that it should have died more than one thousand five hundred years ago, that is, before the Imperial Roman administration started its decline.

Another prediction, also mentioned by the eminent Basque linguist, is the one articulated by William von Humboldt more than one hundred and fifty years ago. Humboldt claimed that by the 20th century, the only remnants of the Basque language would be those left in writing. Despite these negative predictions, the *euskara*, or the language of the Basques, is still spoken by about 800,000 people at the Western end of the Pyrenees mountains, along the Bay of Biscay.

The vast majority of the Basque speakers live in the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country. This is one of the communities that form Spain and it is subsequently divided into three provinces: Gipuzkoa, Bizkaia and Araba[1]. Nevertheless, there is also a substantial number of speakers of the language in the Foral Community of Navarre within Spain and in three provinces of the south of France: Labourdi, Behenafarroa, and Zuberoa. The contemporary situation in terms of number of speakers in these three political domains is quite different. The specific information[2] in terms of number of speakers and percentages in the three provinces in the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country is offered in Table 1 and the information about the Foral Community of Navarre and the three provinces in France is presented in Table 2. All the data come from the Web site from the Department of Culture

[1] I am providing the Basque toponyms for the sake of consistency. The corresponding Spanish names for the three provinces are Guipuzcoa, Vizcaya and Alava. The three place-names in French are Labourd, Basse-Navarre and Soule, which form the so-called Departement des Pyrénées-Atlantiques in France.

[2] The official site divides the group of 'bilinguals' into three sub-groups: Basque-predominant, balanced bilingual and Spanish/French-dominant. For more detailed information the reader can visit the above mentioned Web site.

of the Basque Government: http://www.euskadi.net/euskara/indice_c.htm

Typology	Araba	Bizkaia	Gipuzkoa
Basque monolingual	0	6,600	11,300
	0.00%	0.68%	2.02%
bilingual	15,600	151,800	234,100
	7.01%	15.83%	41.70%
Spanish monolingual	189,400	728,300	255,800
	85.44%	75.98%	45.58%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Table1: Distribution of Basque speakers in the three provinces in the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country

Typology	Nafarroa	Lapurdi	Behe-nafarroa	Zuberoa
Basque monolingual	2,700	2,100	500	300
	0.65%	1.26%	2.07%	2.12%
bilingual	37,500	43,300	14,800	8,100
	8.90%	25.33%	59.47 %	61.74%
Spanish/French monolingual	361,200	113,400	8,700	3,000
	85.87%	66.32%	35.06 %	22.62%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 2: Distribution of Basque speakers in the Foral Community of Navarre and the three French provinces

The total of Basque speakers is quite unevenly distributed, as we can see in the preceding tables. There are very few Basque monolinguals and the vast majority of the Basque speakers are also Spanish or French speakers. The highest percentages of Basque bilinguals are in the province of Gipuzkoa and in the Basque French provinces of Behenafarroa and Zuberoa. Nevertheless, we have to keep in mind that the difference in density of population in the two areas: while the province of Gipuzkoa is very heavily populated, the two French provinces are rural and with a low number of inhabitants. Other provinces, such as Bizkaia have a large number of Basque speakers, but due to the high density of population in the area the percentage of Basque speakers is quite low.

In terms of social and political status, the language enjoys quite different official status in the different domains. The three provinces of Gipuzkoa, Bizkaia and Araba have conformed the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country since 1979. Right after General Franco's death[3], an autonomous government was created in order to run the political and social life of these three provinces. One of the main goals of the relatively new Basque Government has been to protect and expand the Basque language. The establishment of the Statute of Autonomy (*Estatuto de Autonomía, Ley orgánica 3/1979*) December, 18th 1979 had a crucial impact on the future life of the Basque Country. Among other things, the Statute contains a number of articles referring to the Basque language or Euskara, by virtue of which the Basque language becomes official.

A few years later, in 1982, the Basque Parliament passed a law (10/1982, the 24 of November). In its preface of the Law for the Normalization of the Use of Basque *(ley básica de normalización de uso del euskara)* it states that the Constitution[4] and the Statute rely on public institutions to ensure the development and normalization of the use of the Basque language. Since the early eighties the Department of Culture and more specifically, its section of Language Policy, or *Hizkuntza Politikarako Sailordetza* in Basque *and Viceconsejería de Política Lingüística* in Spanish, has been working to assess the linguistic situation of the Basque Country and to develop clear and hopefully effective lines of action to reverse the on-going language shift. In the next section I review some of the main lines of action.

[3] During Franco's government, from 1937 until 1975, Basque, as well as the other languages spoken in Spain, Catalan and Galician, were banned from schools and the public sphere in general. In the later years of the Franco régime, however, the situation for minority languages in Spain was somehow relaxed.

[4] The Spanish Constitution dates from 1978 and recognizes the multilingual and multicultural status of this country. From an institutional point of view, the Spanish state, using the possibility offered by the Constitution, is divided into seventeen autonomous communities.

Language Planning and the Basque Government [5]

The language policy programmed in the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country is governed by three basic criteria: the democratic principle, the principle of affirmative action and the principle of complementarity. According to the democratic principle, the language planning must be in agreement with the majority of the citizens. The principle of affirmative action implies that equal treatment in situations of difference may enhance those differences. In that sense, there is a need to favor and protect the minority language. Finally, the principle of complementarity tries to find a balance between two forces: the one from the public sphere and the one from individual and social initiative.

Some important lines of action derive from these principles, but one of the areas that has received more attention has been the educational system. According to the Department of Education, 12,000 students received instruction in Basque in the 70's, but ten years later that number increased to 65,000 as a result of the establishment of a language policy[6]. This change in the language of instruction of a large number of children required great effort in the basquisation[7] of the teachers involved. Some educators are being released to study Basque, under the so-called IRALE[8] program. In addition, another part of the budget is being used to develop new pedagogical material: printed matters, audiovisuals and software.

At the level of higher education, the University of the Basque Country has developed a plan to gradually introduced Basque in the different fields and degrees. According to the official source, during the academic year of 1996/97 a total of 9,186 students took classes in Basque, 15% of the total of the university students. Finally, for those adults that want to learn the language, there is a net of public schools that are sponsored with public funds. Within the mass media, three areas have been the target of attention: radio, newspapers and television. Until the eighties there was no radio broadcasting uniquely in Basque. This gap was filled with the creation of *Euskadi Irratia* in 1982 and, some years later, in 1990 *Euskadi Gaztea*, which is addressed to a younger audience, started broadcasting. The Basque Government also spends part of its budget sponsoring a variety of newspapers and journals. Finally, in 1982 a television channel started broadcasting entirely in Basque, and it is estimated that by 1996 this television channel had attracted 225,000 viewers. Other areas that have drawn the attention of the Basque Government and receive funding from it are the basquisation of its own administration[9], the private enterprise, the printing industry, music, theater and cinema.

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[5] The information in this section comes from the website created by the Department of Culture of the Basque Government and is available at http://www.euskadi.net/euskara/indicei_i.htm

[6] For a more detailed description of the different models of bilingual education and the percentages of children attending each model, see the official publication Eusko Jaurlaritza/Gobierno Vasco (1990) and for more updated information, visit the Web page of the Basque Government http://www.euskadi.net/euskara/indicei_i.htm

[7] The Basque auto-denomination of its people is *euskaldun*, literally 'the one that possesses the Basque language'. There is no label in Basque for the people born in the Basque Country who do not speak the language. Thus, as is common in other cultures, the language is the defining feature of the *euskaldunak* or 'the Basque people'. The Basque Government has given its language campaign the Spanish label of *euskaldunización*, which I have translated as 'Basquisation', following Fishman (1991). This is somehow imprecise or confusing, since the target of the campaign are Basques although they are not "euskaldunak" or speakers of the Basque language.

[8] This is a program that affects teachers in the public and private education and allows them to either become literate in Basque if they already speak it or to learn it. More information about the details of this program is available at the Web site of the Basque Government: http://www1.hezkuntza.ej-gv.net/dih2/h2_c.htm

[9] During 1990-95 workers from the Basque Government were required to learn some Basque and the level of the command of the language they had to acquired varied depending on the type of job and the area. More detailed information on the development of the first plan can be found in Martínez-Arbelaiz (1992). According to the official records from the web site of Basque Government, 88,5% of the federal workers achieved the requiered level of the language.

Summarizing, a number of steps are being taken by the Administration of the Basque Government in order to ensure the survival of the language. The underlying assumption is the above mentioned principle of affirmative action or the idea that the minority language has to be protected or has to receive extra funding and extra attention so that its intergenerational transmission is not interrupted. Nevertheless, the project of reversing the language shift that the Basque Government is attempting with so much energy is not straightforward and is subject to the ups and downs the Basque society goes through.

In the last ten years, not only the Basque society, but the world in general has experienced the gradual introduction of a new way of interacting with one another. The new form of communication I am referring to is based on the Internet, which offers web sites, chat rooms, forums, listserves and electronic mail. These new modes of interaction are usually referred to with the general label of Computer-mediated communication (CMC). Scholars from multiple disciplines are looking at the Internet in order to determine the impact it is having and it is going to have on our lives. Before jumping into the topic of the consequences that this third environment[10] may have on minority groups, such as the community of Basque speakers, let us review some of the general main ideas that social theorists, linguists, philosophers, educators, etc. have proposed about the Internet.

The Internet, is it a revolution?

The Internet is said to completely change the way we interact with one another. Urberoaga (2000) gives us some real examples related to the economic sector, where more and more people shop, bank, and invest online. In addition, he mentions that the Internet has spawned many new sub-cultures such as gaming groups and hackers, among others. As Rheingold (1993) states: 'people in virtual communities use words on screens to exchange pleasantries and argue, engage in intellectual discourse, conduct commerce, exchange knowledge, share emotional support, make plans, brainstorm, gossip, feud, fall in love, find friends and lose them, play games, flirt, create a little high art and a lot of idle talk. People in virtual communities do just about everything people do in real life, but we leave our bodies behind'.

It is undeniable that the phenomenal growth of the Internet has captured both popular and scholarly imaginations. In general, opinions come from two opposed groups: the technophiles and the technophobes, although it is the former group the one that enjoys more visibility. The argument of the inevitability of the coming technology may be responsible for the greater body of articles that underscore the advantages of the use and the spreading of the Internet. Nevertheless, many of the articles from different disciplines are futuristic speculations still far from being documented with data. As Herring (1996) points out in the introduction of her book, "[t]here is thus a pressing need for descriptive and empirical research on computer-mediated interaction." Some disciplines, such as linguistics, second language acquisition and language pedagogy have paid serious attention to this emerging phenomenon. The language used in these exchanges has been the object of scrutiny, and scholars agree that, although it is written, its degree of interaction is similar to the oral language. Some examples of this type of research can be found in Ferrara, Bruner & Whittemore 1991 and in Condon & Cech 1996. In the field of language teaching, there is a growing interest in the effect that this new environment may have for practices and theory on the acquisition of a foreign and second language. Warschauer and Kern (2000) provide a wide-range of empirical studies on the use of network-based language teaching, both from the pedagogical and the theoretical perspective.

Finally, a number of articles have pointed out the effect that the Intenet may have in politics and, articles such as Krebs (2001) argues that cyberspace is a power that has some consequences for the Burmese government. According to this source, the government is increasingly afraid of the organization that the opposition has reached through the Internet and many of the reports available on the World

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In addition, a second plan that will be completed in 2002 has been proposed.

[10] The Internet offers a third environment, as opposed to the other two: the field and the city. Human beings do different things in a rural society, in a industrial society or in an information society. This third environment, according to some philosophers like Echeverría (1999), modifies almost all the human actions.

Wide Web play a role in the development of the country's politics[11].

Even though examples like the Burmese opposition are highly suggestive, the possibilities of the Internet are endless and the impact that it may have in our lives is unknown and unpredictable. Before jumping into the domain of speculation, and linking the Internet with the Basque community, let us review some data on the actual use of this new environment within the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country.

The Internet in the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country.

According to the *Asociación de Investigación de Medios de Comunicación*, a very low percentage of the population of the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country has access to the Internet. In the provinces of Gipuzkoa and Araba the percentages are a little higher, 11.4% and 11% respectively and a little lower in Bizkaia, with 8%. Only 5% chat several times a day, 54% check their e-mail and 48% navigate the Web, according to the same source. Another piece of information that is relevant here is that the language chosen in these exchanges is English 49% of the times and Basque only 5.6%, according to a survey done by Kaixo! and Eustat in 1999[12].

The conclusion we can draw from here is the same Velez de Mendizabal (2000) arrived at, namely, that the use of the Internet is very low among Basque speakers. Nevertheless, when they make use of the electronic medium they resort to English. The reason for this choice is not straightforward and, in my opinion, two functions of the Internet must be differentiated. One reason one may use the Internet is to obtain information, and a second reason may be to interact with other human beings. Crystal (1995) points out that 85% of the information on the Web is in English. In addition, Urberoaga (2000) mentions that there are very few Web sites in Basque and he points out the prohibitive costs of connecting to the Internet in the Basque Country. In comparison with the USA where 50% of the population enjoys this connection, in the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country, local calls to access the Internet are not free and, consequently, must be kept to a minimum. In addition, Urberoaga (2000) mentions the lack of tools in the Basque language, such as indexing tools, spell-checkers, etc.[13]

With respect to the lack of interesting Web sites in Basque, it should be mentioned that the Basque Government is funding an on-line Basque newspaper, *Egunkaria*, and several other sites, such as *Ihardun Multimedia*, *Zabalik*, *Argia*, etc.[14] In addition, there is a program by which the Basque Government offers some financial help in order to buy a personal computer and connect to Internet. Despite this program, it is true that the connection is still rather expensive.

The second function of the Internet is to connect with other human beings and to chat in virtual rooms, forums or mailing lists. Fernandez (2000) has examined the language choice in some local forums and has arrived at the conclusion that the Basque language is not present in forums without a language policy. He finds that there are three forums where exchanges are obligatorily in Basque, but outside those three forums, exchanges are almost exclusively in Spanish.

Conclusion

Aramberri (2001) mentions that the society of information eliminates distances and barriers. Some totalitarian governments fear that the free communication among their citizens and the rest of the world will favor the appearance of enemies of the system. Some also fear that the globalization is going to propitiate language uniformity and the homogeneity in customs. In addition, Arambarri also claims that trying to prevent this is impossible and that the Internet facilitates the establishment of "virtual communities", without geographical limitations. In the case of the Basque community, this may be useful for the

[11] Murray (2000:53) offers the following examples: 'Sites of empowerment do exist. During the Cultural Revolution in China, students e-mailed the news of Tiananmen Square massacre around the world; Servian democracy activists broadcast on the Internet, in defiance of their government; Kosovo safe-haven refugees in Australia became computer literate almost overnight to keep in contact with family and friends around the world.'

[12] The data can be found in either www.eustat.es/english/index.html or in www.kaixo.com.

[13] The same lack of tools is mentioned by Irizar, I et al. (2001) when trying to complete a Book Cataloging system in Basque.

[14] The source of this information is not the official page of the Basque Government, but www.kaixo.com

unification of Basque speakers in America, Australia, France or Spain. The question is whether this is a utopian thought and are we falling into an excess of hope in technology. The reality nowadays is that the Internet is hardly used and, when Basque speakers use it, they either resort to Spanish in forums, or they read information in English Web sites.

The developments of the means of communications are in constant evolution, as Murray (2000:54) points out: "[t]he introduction of writing did not replace oral communication; the advent of print did not replace writing; electronic communication has not replaced print. Each exists as part of the complex communication forms available for human beings to use, depending on the context of the communicative event." The challenge of the Basque community in the years to come is to find the place for its language in this complex interplay of forms of communication.

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Visual Metaphor: Semana Santa en la Sierra Tarahumara

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Abstract

This paper is about the Tarahumara Indians from the Sierra Madre Mountains of Chihuahua México, and how they use visual metaphor in their yearly commemoration of the *Semana Santa*, which is the Holy Week of Easter. The event is called *Norírahuachi* and it is the Highest Holy Day celebrated with *tesguinada*, or ceremonial beer drinking, as the central festivity marking the *Pasqua* (Passover). *Norírahuachi* is a Tarahumara word that means, *"cuando andan dando vueltas de una cruz a otra"* (When they are dancing and making circles from one cross to another, to each erected patio cross).[1] *Norírahuachi* is part of a death wake, or the state of staying awake to watch over the dead. It blends true historical facts in impossible conceptual combinations to create contradictory unity through visual metaphor. The purpose of the paper is threefold: to explore the meaning of the pillars of the sky legend, to document the hybrid blend of Mexican folk mythologies on good and evil, and to show how this information is disseminated within a society whose language is largely unwritten. This paper accompanies a video documentation of the final days of the April 2000 *Semana Santa* celebration in the village of *Norogáchi*. Both are attempts to bring Tarahumara visual metaphor out of the ritual spectacle of *Norírahuachi* and carry the symbols of endangered belief systems to a larger audience through electronic documentation with the potential of mass media distribution.

Visual Metaphor

The Tarahumara are an indigenous people of Chihuahua, Mexico who use their ancient Uto-Aztecan language and visual metaphor as a means of communicating their history and ancient legends. Symbolic gesture and visual reenactment in ceremonial dance serve as effectual instruments for the transmission of social notions and semantic scripts. Visual metaphors are important components in Tarahumara storytelling. An intricate combination of sounds, symbols, signs, and gestures serve as tools for the preservation and communication of Tarahumara cultural beliefs.

Visual metaphors are depictive mental representations of mythical and historical memories built on the basis of historical memories.

Figure 1: The commencement of *Norírahuachi*

Metaphorical statements use symbols to stand in the place of the image. "Image" is a rational notion that can be used to signify knowledge about the external world, i.e., the intentional object (Repeko, 2000). Metaphorical tension arises from literal incompatibility of the symbols used to describe the intentional object, and the listener experiences some aesthetic delight when he discovers the hidden meaning of metaphor (Gibbs, 1994). *Norírahuachi* is a living metaphor, not just a spectacle seen by the people, the Tarahumara live it, annually, and everyone participates. Its very idea embraces all people. It is the social consciousness of the Tarahumara people, and there are no distinctions between actors and spectators. The increasing ease of use and non-intrusive qualities of modern digital video technologies can open the door for us into the internal world of the Tarahumara, and allow the spectators to enter another reality. A view of the cultural imagery not only provides insight into the normative knowledge behind endangered language scripts, but, more significantly, it allows everyone to participate and individually decide the validity of the metaphorical statements in *Norírahuachi*.

[1] Glossario Diccionario Tarahumara, Tarahumara-Spanish (1959, 1993). Summer Institute of Linguistics, Inc. [Author's translation into English].

The authors will look at the metaphor in *Norírahuachi* as a sort of riddle. The facts that the riddle entertains correspond to a set of truths; but, if taken literally, to a set of false statements. The ambiguity inherent in the dance introduces two sets of meaning, and two sets of principles for understanding. The Tarahumara *fareseos* dance circles in parallel, and "pass over" all Tarahumara homes which have the erected wooden cross. *Norírahuachi* is the *Semana Santa* (Holy Week, or Holy 7-days), and it is essentially related to the occurrence of God visiting man. The ritual represents the *inicio del año* (start of the Year) for the Tarahumara Rarámuri (Bennett & Zingg, 1935; Dunne, 1948).[2] In the Tarahumara Indian village of Norogáchi, Chihuahua, in the Sierra Madre Occidental mountain range of north Mexico, Tarahumara from all over the Copper Canyon converge to dance or die.

The Tarahumara *Rarámuri*

The Tarahumara gentiles live in the southwestern part of the state of Chihuahua, located southwest of El Paso, Texas. They believe that they are an elite people charged with the role of serving *Onorúame* (God the Father) through religious wakes called *tesgüinadas*. Two of the most important religious wakes are performed for the *Semana Santa* (Holy Week), or the 7-day Feast of Unleavened Bread (Passover) in April, and for the Feast of the Harvest, or *Dia de los Muertos* (Day of the Dead) in November. These are considered Tarahumara gentile practices. There may be many uncounted Tarahumara still living outside of baptism. Literature indicates that there are 50,000 Tarahumara Rarámuri that are considered gentiles, *broncos* (wild) and pagans (Levi, 1993). The Rarámuri: 1) reject the imagery of the church, 2) bury their dead in caves and live seasonally in caves, 3) use stone-piles altars, 4) they are semi-nomadic, and 5) they dance three major fiestas per year: the *Semana Santa*, in April, the Feast of the First Fruits in August, and the Feast of the Harvest, *Dia de los Muertos*, in November (Bennett & Zing, 1935). The 97% who are "Christianized" still retain nearly as much of aboriginal religious customs as their more rebellious counterparts (Kennedy, 1978, Gonzáles, 1991).

Figure 2: Tarahumara women exit the city.

[2] The Passover/Easter is celebrated very close to the Persian New Year, March 14 -March 21.

"Pillars of the Sky" is the ethnic identity of the Rarámuri Cimaronni (indigenous gentiles), and they claim to be the descendants of a priest hood, "the chosen people" of God (Levi, 1993; Jessen, 1996). They translate that they originated from the location on the earth where the pillars touched the sky (Levi, 1993; Gonzáles & Palma, 1985). *Onorúame*, or God the Father, was at the "pillar" that they followed. The religious altars of the Tarahumara are earth and stone rock piles, a small wooden cross is positioned near the mound (Fontana, 1979). Earthen and stone mounds are scattered throughout the trails in the Sierra Tarahumara, and they serve as altars and as the demarcations for the Pharisees to follow during the wake of *Norírahuachi*. Beer offerings are made at the erected earthen and stone mounds, and patio crosses.

Figure 3: Stone altar positioned above the city.

Tesgüinada

The *tesgüinada* is a Tarahumara ritual that marks sacred Holy Days with all-night wake activity, including beer-drinking and a surveillance dance. The root word *tesgüino* is the Tarahumara name for their corn-fermented beer. Beer and humor are central to every Tarahumara fiesta. Tarahumara culture encourages drunkenness and attaches no shame or disgrace to it (Fontana, 1979). The most important social factor in Tarahumara society is the joking relationship established between *comadres* or *compadres* and reciprocal invitations to beer drinking parties (Kennedy, 1970). They worship with drinking, laughter and dance. Beer-drinking, humor, and object mockery are intimately connected with religion. It is during High Holy days that very important joking rituals are undertaken. [3]

The Passover *tesgüinada* consists of a three-day long beer drinking ceremonial dance. . The ritual involves interaction with supernatural forces to protect God, the Father. The *tesgüinada* is a vigil, a watch-and-wait period founded on their mythic past. According to one legend, (Bonfiglioli 1995), God and the Devil were

[3] Many scholars have written about the importance of the "joking relationship" among the Tarahumara. The Mexican Holiday, the Day of the Dead, provides a good example of how laughter is used as an instrument for confronting death and the dead. Mexican's picnic and party all day in the cemetery with their dead ancestors every November. See, Fontana (1979) and Kennedy (1978).

brothers who, in the beginning, were having *tesgüino* together. The Devil caused God to become drunk. When God became drunk, the Devil had sexual relations with God's wife. From this incident, the Devil was confined to the earth. The all-night events are forums where the participants reenact an ancient myth believed to maintain the cosmic balance between good and evil until God awakens to take revenge. During *tesgüinadas*, the Tarahumara recreate ritual spectacle by mapping distinctly separate historical objects onto one another, in a contradictory union to ask the viewer to contemplate metaphorical systems that are deeply anchored in an indigenous and ancient culture.

The Tarahumara follow the old calendar, where night comes before the day. Thursday sunset is the beginning of the preparation day (Friday). A wake, or a "period of watchfulness," will be undertaken that is centered on the night vigil called the *baile de los fareseos* (the dance of the Pharisees). Vigils are acts of caring for the dead by keeping awake at times when sleep is customary. The Tarahumara will take on the image of the ancient Jewish sect and are *pintatos blanco* (painted white with clay). For the three days and three nights, the Tarahumara will wake for the dead, until the last Sabbath day of the *Semana Santa*. The dance will require that all Tarahumara males appear before God by visiting and dancing at each erected cross, positioned on a stone or earthen altar. They dance at all the homes identified by the cross. Tarahumara ceremonial dances during the *Semana Santa* represent three symbolic paradoxes of the "Passover": 1) the Angel of Death, which searched for all those who bear not the blood cross on the door, as it was the case in ancient Egyptian history, 2) the events undertaken by the Pharisees during the Passover at the time of Christ, beginning on the preparation day (Thursday sunset), and 3) the indigenous Tarahumara belief in their role to save-guard the future of mankind through the pillars of the sky legend.

Semana Santa (The Holy Week)

The Feast of Unleavened Bread was first described in a manuscript dated 1491 BC as the 7-day commemoration of the miraculous events that lead up to the Passover and Exodus from Egypt. The dictate forbids the eating of leavened bread for seven days and on the last day is a feast (*fiesta*) to the Lord (Exodus 13:4-6). On the 14th day of the month of Abib an animal was killed and eaten as part of a Saturday festival. Then the eating of leaven bread is prohibited for seven days, until the 21st of the month. Only the flat-bread *tortilla* can be eaten. The law was instituted following the Hebrew Exodus, and it was to be enacted annually.

> "And you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month: the whole assembly of Israel shall kill it in the evening. And they shall take of the blood and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper doorposts of the house, wherein they shall eat it. And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roasted with fire, and with unleavened bread...[ ]."[4]

[4] The Book of Exodus, Chapter 12: 7-8.

Mexican Indian women make a bread pudding on the Friday before the Sabbath begins called *capirotada*, and it is eaten as a dessert with raisins, milk, and cinnamon. It is a convention which usefully adapts the required "removal" of all the leavened bread from the home before the Holy Week begins. Beginning on Friday at sunset,

Figure 4: Tarahumara women making *tortillas*

only tortilla can be eaten for seven days. The quick method of preparing tortilla, without leaven, is a symbol of the haste in which the Hebrews fled Egypt. *Tortilla*, *capirotada* and *tesgüinada* are native to the Mexican Indigenous vocabulary; they are not Spanish inherited concepts. The first and last Saturdays, the day between the two nightfalls, are festivals to God. Several authors continue to suggest that the Jesuits taught the Tarahumara the "Passover" procession; however, translations from 1626-1724 Latin transcripts, written by one of the first Jesuit priests in Tarahumara country, Father Joseph Neumann, recorded that the Jesuits' vehemently attempted to eliminate the beer-drinking ritual practice (González, 1991). While we were in the Tarahumara village of *Norogáchi* Chihuahua filming the event, the Catholic missionaries and all Christian staff stayed inside the convent halls until the ceremony ceased. There were no "black coats" present. And they seemed quite intimidated by the farce of the *fareseos*.

The Farce of the *Fareseos*

The Tarahumara dance the *tesgüinada* of *Norirahuachi* dress in traditional loin clothes parade themselves as allies of the Jewish sect. They mimic, in parallel, events of the Passover at the time of the Exodus and events of the Passover at the time of Christ. The common dramatic thread is the ritual eating and drinking of the Passover meal and the final battle between good and evil, as represented by the soldiers (*soldados*) and the Pharisees (*fariseos*). Those who protect the earth are the Rarámuri soldiers who enact the mythological battle between the sons of the Devil, called "*fareseos*" or "Pharisees," and the sons of *Onoríame*, or the Tarahumara soldiers (Bonfiglioli, 1995). The Pharisees, daubed with white clay paint, carry wooden swords or guns and a white flag. The soldiers, dressed in the traditional Tarahumara loin-cloth carry wooden staffs and a red flag. To represent the state of the world, they show the presence of good and evil in one body: the "righteous" (Tarahumara) assume

the identity of the mythological characters in alliance with "the devil" (Bonfiglioli, 1995). But both will become entwined by the ritual beer servitude between all participants. The unification of good and bad, in one form, allows the Tarahumara to temporarily suspend the hierarchic distinctions and barriers between them and the *mestizos* (mixed race) and *chabochis* (white people), and other certain traditions, norms, and prohibitions of their usual life, and allow everyone present to take part and engage in ritual servitude in beer-drinking. The utopian brotherhood,

Figure 5: Drinking tesgüino beer together.

where the master becomes the servant of all, is represented in the dance ritual through engaging in the reciprocal servitude of *tesgüino*-beer while parading themselves as allies of the Church, the *fareseos*. Tarahumara's do not place themselves above the deity of evil, but they themselves become the deity and all become the servants of all.

> 'If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, and you should do as I have done to you.' [5]

As at the time of the Passover meal, all are one; and as during the Last Supper, there are no divisions between the twelve apostles, though one was a devil. No one will drink that is not served and handed the vile by another Tarahumara. The Pharisees dance and drink the Passover meal at every home in the village. The Rarámuri are servants to each other, and no one ever drinks *tesgüino* that is not served by another Tarahumara. All become entwined by the ritual beer servitude between the participants. In Tarahumara culture, beer is the Tarahumara national drink and beer is their medium of interchange. It is also the instrument of repayment given to the *curanderos* (those who heal, or cure) for their protection against *brujerías* (witchcraft). The beer drinking wakes are done to guard against the wandering soul of the dead. The Tarahumara believe that the deceased don't know that they are dead, and they return after three days and can harm the living if they are not waked (stayed up with all night) and accompanied into the Land of the Dead with beer and food offerings during tesgüinada. Beer servitude and running to the crosses will bind them together, and divide them apart. The *fareseos* become two bodies in one, both the budding and the division of one living cell, the chosen of God the Father and allies of the Fallen Angel. The dancers travel and weave synchronized circles throughout the entire village, sounding the *tambor* and *flauta* continually, day and night. At earthen mound shaped altars, they perform servitude in beer drinking and the eating of flat bread (*tortilla de maíz*).

The Angel of Death

For the "passing over", the Tarahumara take the identity of the *fareseos*. After eating and drinking together, Jesus bows himself before Judas Iscariot and washes the feet of the man who will betray him. After eating and drinking the Passover together, the devil enters Judas Iscariot. Judas knows the whereabouts of the Christ; and for money, he leads the Pharisees to the location of the Christ effigy.

> 'And Judas received a great band of men and officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, that came with lanterns and torches and weapons.'[6]

Judas, represented as a stuffed marauder, dances at the head of a great multitude of Tarahumara *fareseos*. Judas is depicted as a Mexican-*mestizo*, or Mexican (mixed) cowboy. The criterion for distinguishing between *mestizo* and *indígena* is the ability to speak the Uto-Aztecan language, Tarahumara, and their resistance to intermarriage (Gonzáles, *et al.*, 1994).[7] The Tarahumara are still a pure race.

Figure 6: Judas leading the Tarahumara

[5] The Book of St. John, Chapter 13: 14-15.

[6] The Book of St. John, Chapter 18: 3.

[7] There is a misconception that the conquest and the forced Catholic conversions resulted in gene-mixing entirely between Spanish and (native) Mexican Indian. The Jesuit Order of Christ, the dominant Catholic institution responsible for sending missionaries into New Spain in the 17th century, was centered in Bohemia (Germany) and included missionaries from all over South-Central Europe, including Bohemia, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Prague, Austria, Belgium, France, and Croatia, as well as Spain (Gonzáles, 1991).

While maintaining the failing alliance, the Tarahumara visit each home with a patio erected cross; in the pattern of the Angel that also visited and killed every first born male in Egypt. The Tarahumara *fareseos* dance circles in parallel lines at all Tarahumara homes which have the erected wooden cross, stopping regularly to pass beer. In the pattern of Christ serving the Traitor and eating with the traitor as during the Last Supper, and in the pattern of the division between those who would survive and those who would be slain before the Passover, all the first born male children of the Hebrews prepare to Exodus and escape the death by running. The destroying Angel, as at the time of the Exodus, has been given the power on earth to kill the male inhabitants of the unmarked homes.

Figure 7: The Tarahumara *fareseos* Exodus

The Angel that goes forth to kill all first born male children, as recorded in the book of Exodus, us also represented by the Pharisees, which were the instruments of death, crucifying Christ. The Passover was the last miracle performed in Egypt before the Exodus; the Passover was also the Last Supper at the time of Christ. The miracles convinced Pharaoh to release the Hebrews after 430 years of living in slavery. The mass convergence of the Tarahumara dancers for *Norírahuachi* is a visual commemoration of both. There are striking parallels between the Tarahumara traditional dress and the dictate preparing them for plight.

> 'with girded loin-cloths, shoes on their feet, and staff in hand, they prepare for their flight from bondage.' And you shall eat with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in hand; and you shall eat it in haste: it is the Lord's Passover.' [8]

Thus, it is the celebration of those who walked through the sign of the cross markings on their doorposts and escaped through the Red Sea. The instrument of escape was the spilling of blood and its use as paint to mark the doorposts in the shape of the cross. The cross markings served as protection against the visitation of the destroying angel, when God would allow for its "passing over" of the cities of Egypt. The entity of *Norírahuachi* is the Angel of Lord that went out to destroy.

> "***At about midnight I will out into the midst of Egypt.***"[9]

Norírahuachi

Although the dictate of the Passover was written following the Hebrew Exodus from Egypt, preceding Christianity, Christ takes center stage during the Passover for the entire Western world. Jesus of Nazareth claimed to be the lamb sent to be the ritual sacrifice and the One who talked with Moses, guiding him during the performance of the Great Miracles that led the captives out of Egypt.

> 'He who was in the congregation in the wilderness with the Angel who spoke to him Moses on Mount Sinai, and who was with our fathers, the one who received the living oracles (Passover law) to give to us.' [10]

The Pharisees were the leaders of the ancient Jewish sect at the time of Christ. The winding rows of Tarahumara *fareseos* visit every household in a "hunt for the sign of the cross." Judas is a straw stuffed Mexican cowboy, who at the same time is allied with the Pharisees in the search for the Christ. They keep stopping to serve and drink *tesgüino* with all inhabitants who have erected the cross at the ancient altar. The Tarahumara *fareseos* are serving beer to the ones who have the cross mark at the home and dancing on their patio; but the Tarahumara Rarámuri, who are the chosen priests of *Onoríame*, are the ones who are intending to capture and kill the hailed Christ. At the crucifixion, the sun went down during the day, and the day became night. It was dark, but the people were awake. This is the wake paralleling the three days of darkness in Egypt.

The Three Days of Darkness

Fear comes over the population and the Indians will wake all Friday night, the commencement of the Sabbath, for the soul of the dead. Their "awakened" state brings all to re-live the three days of darkness that was precursor to the flight of the Hebrew from Egypt. The last miracle performed in Egypt consisted of three days of complete darkness, and a darkness that could be felt. For three days, there was light only in the Hebrew corridors. And on the preparation night, the animal was slain and the doorposts were marked with the blood. It is symbolic of the three-day duration of Christ's entry into "Land of the dead." The Day of the Dead feast corresponds to the ancient Feast of the Harvest. Night is the day of the dead. The wake of the dead is during the night. Night becomes the day, and the dead return to their premises (Bennett & Zing, 1935). Beliefs and practices surrounding deaths parallel superstitions concerning dreaming. During the night, while sleeping, the Tarahumara believe that the soul of the dreamer wanders around outside the body. And during dreams, the many strangers that can potentially be manifest can harm the soul (Pastron, 1977). If this happens, one will awaken with sickness. Sickness is healed by a *curandero* (the one who cures) who travels in dream as well, and sets out to find the location of the

[8] The Book of Exodus, Chapter 12: 8, 11.

[9] The Book of Exodus, Chapter 11: 4.

[10] The Book of Acts, Chapter 7: 37.

one who has caused the harm, and recapture the soul of the sick person. Tarahumara are very superstitious about dreaming because witchcraft can be harnessed by any of those that enter one's dreams (Pastron, 1977). This death wake is for the temporary dream state of those affected by the Passover. The Tarahumara believe that in the night, the dead wake. The dance is the symbol of God visiting man; and the fear comes from the belief that God is dead, and has to be *vigilado* (the act of caring for the dead by keeping awake at times when sleep is customary) every year.

Figure 8: ***"Cursed is anyone who is hung on a tree."***

The Madness of Judas The madness of Judas is inherent to the *tesgüinada*. There is something alien in the madman. Judas and his Tarahumara allies. They themselves, believing that they are the chosen of God, become the embodiment of death, and blend the "Ancient and Honorable"(the Christ) at the head, and the "Serpent that speaks lies" (the Judas) as the tail in an unusual dance formation where one form passes into the other as an interwoven, inseparable whole. The essential principal of the unity is to transfer the degradation of mankind from the unseen embodiment of evil, to the material level of earth and body. This world is representative of the existing world that suddenly becomes alien and that needs to be destroyed so that it may be regenerated and renewed. Then while dying it gives birth. The degradation of the object of mankind's transgression (the deceiver) is sent to the lower stratum, to the zone of the organs, into the guts, to the bodily grave, in order to be destroyed. The stress of the transgression is laid upon the parts of the body that are open to the outside world, the parts through which the world enters the body or emerges from it, or from which the body itself goes out to meet the world.

On Saturday, the Tarahumara *fareseos* remove their white paint and transform themselves into Tarahumara soldiers. On the final day of the *Semana Santa*, the symbolic reincarnation of Judas has his guts pulled out. The Tarahumara soldiers lash it to a stake, spear the figure into a pile of straw, and then set fire to it.

The embodiment of evil in Judas, and its transformation through a triumphant killing brings the flowering of the New Year. The vigil is observed annually, until *Onorúame* awakens to take revenge on the Fallen Angel. The Passover was a dictate that marked the New Year in Jewish law

> 'This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you.'[11]

However, the *Semana Santa*, or the Feast of Unleavened Bread, or Easter, was not instituted nor taught as the New Year at the time of the Jesuit entry into New Spain, 1650-1770. But, it still represents the *inicio del año* for the Rarámuri (González, *et. al.*, 1994; Bennett & Zing, 1935).

The philosophical content of *Semana Santa* expresses a universal renewal, the world's revival and the world's renewal; and it is vividly felt as a necessary way of preserving life. The beer festivity is a peculiar quality of the ritual. It is a form of the peoples' second life, or second world, in which all participate more or less, in a offering a completely different aspect of right and wrong in human relations. *Semana Santa* represents the victory of over death and a triumphant renewal of life.

Figure 9: Judas' straw body is burned

The Tarahumara New Year In the folklore of these "primitive" and "peasant" people, one can observe pagan cults that are in serious tone and organization with comic cults of the carnival type. There is use of obscure gesture. It is rich and colorful and has a comic nature that is outside of official Catholic ceremony. Laughter during tesgüinada functions as a magical incantation. Fear is seen as a travesty of seriousness that is defeated by laughter. Laughter, which scoffs at the deity of evil, has regenerative power. Tesgüinada is the cosmic mediator. The more *tesgüino* beer, the more explosions of laughter. It is unlike the ritual of the upper class, and its rich and colorful comic nature is outside of official rules. The laughter of the ritual ceremony serves to communicate to the supernatural mythological beings that a "watch" is underway, where the "sons of God" are waiting, watching, and prepared to ward off the "sons of the Devil." They laugh to defeat authoritarian commandments, prohibitions, death and punishment. The

[11] The Book of Exodus, Chapter 12: 2.

dancing of *Norirahuachi* is the victory over supernatural awe.

The Feast of the New Year is essentially related to time, to God visiting man. The participants depict a moment of crisis, of the breaking point in the cycle of life of man on earth. At the time of the Exodus, the link with time becomes formal and changes in the moment of crisis lead to the flight of the Hebrews from Egypt, the crucifixion of the Christ, and the temporary triumph of the Pharisees. These events became relegated to the past. The feast looks back at the past, and uses the past to consecrate the present. The witnesses to the ceremony are called upon to see one object through another. The Tarahumara allow us to take a step into the spiritual world, where something that seems to be separate becomes united, where contradictions, are now integral, and where the random has reason. The visual metaphor opens a door for us into their internal world, allowing us to enter their reality, where their cultural images give us insight into their normative practical knowledge. We see metaphorical systems that are deeply anchored in ancient culture. Their visual metaphor is world disclosing to us and we are also united with the entity and asked to decide the validity of the imagery and mode of thought behind *Norirahuachi*.

The Intention of Metaphor

Metaphor is a communicative process between sender and receiver, a relationship in which metaphorical meaning and its validity claim are negotiated (Debatin, 1995). Metaphors have to prove themselves in the light of critical reflection. According to Debatin (1997), reflection upon metaphor does not entail converting metaphorical meaning into literal meaning, but instead it requires a determination of deciding validity of the metaphor. Metaphors broaden understanding and open up new perspectives and points of comparison to create new relationships and abolish old ones. Metaphors allow us to decontextualize the problematic and call it into question. And only in the synthesis of anticipatory evidence and rational reflection of meaning and validity be proven (Debatin, 1997).

The dancing of *Norirahuachi* is the victory over all those that oppress and restrict. There was a strong resistance to Catholic mission integration and they refused to bow before the Catholic imagery.[12] Ninety-seven percent of Tarahumara were converted to Catholicism, and three percent of Tarahumara escaped. The Rarámuri were successful at resisting *pueblo* integration because they isolated themselves by running and hiding in the deep gorges of the canyons of the *Sierra Tarahumara*. The most famous of these is the Copper Canyon; it is the largest in the world. The *Sierra Tarahumara* is four times the size of the Grand Canyon (Levi-Meyer,1993). During the 1650-1850 campaigns to dominate them, the "rebellious" Tarahumara men were condemned for their *hechiceros* (those who can make magic) *y brujerías* (witchcraft) and after confessing their sin, they were condemned to death (Gonzáles, 1991). They ran to protect and preserve their identity; they run three days straight in *Norirahuachi*. The Tarahumara are famous for their endurance in running and dancing. By running a Tarahumara can cover forty miles of rough canyon and mountain terrain in six to eight hours (Fontana, 1979). They ran, and they continue to run. *Norirahuachi*, or "running to each house, to dance circles at each patio cross," is how the Tarahumara foot-runners believe that they maintain a "cosmic balance" on the earth.

Conclusions

The discovery of the meaning behind the pillars of the sky legend, which is the Exodus, was the main intent of our travels into Mexico to film during the *Semana Santa*. The paper and the film are attempts to retell the story of the Hebrew Exodus through ritual spectacle in a Tarahumara society where language is orally and visually transmitted. The wake was characterized by extreme paradox. The Tarahumara recreate, through symbolic imagery in ritual dance, the myths associated with the appearance of the Angel of Lord, the killing of all the first-born males, and the mass Hebrew Exodus from Egypt. The Tarahumara dancers also paradoxically graph together these events while mimicking the activities undertaken by the ancient Hebrew sect called the Pharisees during the Crucifixion at the biblical time of Christ. It is quite fascinating that the Tarahumara Rarámuri are considered pagan. Beer drinking during the death wake is the centrally defining feature that distinguishes it most from modern forms of celebrating Easter. Most interesting is the combination of practices reaching back in time to the Hebrew Exodus. The Passover dictate was a Hebrew law instituted as the Feast of Unleavened Bread. It is Easter, and Easter is a 7-day *fiesta, Semana Santa* (a Holy Week) that has been celebrated since its pre-Christian inception. The three day long reenactment of the mysterious escape from the visitation of the Angel of God. The cross marking on the earthen mound is a protection to the Tarahumara chosen, and they show the escape by following the cloud-like and fire-like entity. They follow the old calendar, the Holy day begins at Friday sunset. And the last day of the Week, Saturday, is when the feast ends. Sunday is not the Easter celebration in Tarahumara. The three days and three nights, are maps of the three days of darkness which preceded widespread death just before the Exodus. And at the same time, they are graphed onto the three days and three nights when Christ was dead. The symbolic time frame is also a part of the Tarahumara belief that after thee days, the dead return to the land of the living; and through *tesgüinadas* and night vigils, the living accompany the dead into land where night is the "Day of the Dead." They believe that the night is the *Dia de los Muertos* (day of the dead) (Fontana, 1979).

The Exodus led to the massive running of the children of Israel out of Egypt. Tarahumara means "foot-runners," or "those who run well." It was their running ability that allowed Tarahumara to escape the mission reduction. The Tarahumara are one of the only indigenous Mexican tribes that still retain their aboriginal rituals, language, and customs. "Pillars of the Sky" is the ethnic identity of

[12] The extinct peoples of north Mexico from the State of Chihuahua include: cocoyomes, tobosos, conchos, cholomes, chizos, piros, sumas, julimes, caquitatomes, jócomes, sobaipuris, and chichitames. There are only 7,000 Pima (O'Oba) remaining, 3,000 Tepehuanes (O'Odham), 2,000 Guarojío, and 50,000 Tarahumara Rarámuri (Stephani & Urteaga, *et al.*, 1994).

the *Rarámuri Cimaronni* (wild), and they claim to be the descendants of a priest hood, "the chosen people" of God (Levi-Meyer, 1993). And Rarámuri are the "indigenous after the Pillars of the Sky."

> "And the Lord went before them in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way, and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by night and day." [13]

The Passover is about escape and survival. The moral of the Tarahumara visual storytelling is that there is a clearly defined method for escaping the death. During the mass Exodus, they follow the Pillar out into the wilderness where they wandered, guided by this cloud/fire in the sky.

Figure 10: Tarahumara exit the city.

The paradox is that such little attention has been given to the pillar entity in recounts of the Christian and Catholic versions of the Exodus. But central to Tarahumara mythology is a pillar that went before them. The symbolism is futuristic. If the ceremony is neglected, the pillars of the earth, holding up the sky, would collapse bringing another great destruction, like another the flood, on mankind (Palma, 1992). If the Tarahumara don't dance, the people will die.

This is the myth, and due to its suggestive power, the metaphorical elements of Passover have become mythified. The philosophical idea that it expresses is that there are many false truths in this world, and the Tarahumara want you to look at the world with eyes free from these "truths." Metaphor is a counterfactual statement that possesses a possible truth (Debatin, 1997). It is the rituals and myths associated with the Passover, and how the protocols are so sharply distinct from the official and political forms of the Easter celebration of Christianity that have attracted the attention of the authors.

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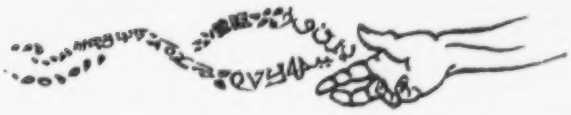

7

Language in the Ether:

Across Political Boundaries

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Across the Andean Airwaves: Satellite Radio Broadcasting in Quechua

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Abstract

Quechua, with some 8-12 million speakers scattered over five Andean countries, is the most widely spoken indigenous language of the Americas. Currently, it is enjoying a political resurgence, due to pressure from indigenous organizations and its incorporation into state-sponsored bilingual education programs. Nevertheless, it continues to lose ground in most social contexts before the advancing pressure of Spanish. One medium that has been relatively neglected in official language planning and Andean sociolinguistic scholarship, despite its importance to Quechua social life and political organization, is radio. The recent appearance of the *Red Quechua Satelital Continental* not only raises the indigenous-language broadcasting to a new level, but also raises new questions about the role of this medium in relation to Quechua's future vitality. Issues addressed in this paper include language planning decisions related to broadcasting for a dialectally heterogenous audience; the influence of broadcast media on mutual intelligibility between local dialects; and the role of Quechua radio within broader programs of language maintenance/revitalization. Whereas current language planning efforts around Quechua focus almost exclusively on school- and literacy-based functions, this paper emphasizes the importance of the oral realm, and to oral media such as radio, in the development of multi-faceted strategies for minority language maintenance and/or revitalization.

In this paper I describe a recent initiative in indigenous language broadcasting: the *Red Quechua Satelital Continental*.[1] Despite a surge in government investment in language planning around Quechua over the last decade, most of this effort has focused on bilingual primary education, with little academic or state attention paid to the media presence of indigenous languages. Overwhelmingly, Quechua is used for face-to-face oral communication at the family or community level, aside from the school (where the introduction of Quechua on a large scale is quite recent and much disputed), radio is virtually the only widespread exception to this rule. It has the added distinction of being controlled largely by Quechua speakers themselves (though often funded by the Catholic Church). In Bolivia, where a third of the population are Quechua speakers, Quechua-language radio is widely accessible, and has been a key factor in both the daily life of rural dwellers and in the country's tumultuous political history.[2] Here, I will analyze its significance to the forging of a broader (international) Quechua language awareness and its relation to language revitalization efforts in other domains.

In a sense, Quechua represents a "best case scenario" of indigenous language revitalization efforts in the realm of mass media. Quechua is far and away the most widely spoken of the 600-700 indigenous languages of the Americas, with 8-12 million speakers (estimates vary) in Peru, Bolivia, and Ecuador, and smaller populations in Argentina and Colombia; the next-biggest native American language is Nahuatl (Mexico), with only 1.4 million speakers (Grinevald, 1998:132). In short, relative to most languages that might be considered endangered, Quechua is in very good shape. Nevertheless, its general decline before the advance of Spanish is unmistakable, though situations vary widely from one region (and practically from one community) to another.[3]

Many media goals that appear utopian for smaller languages were long ago surpassed by Quechua. David Crystal recommends that efforts to break the dominant language's monopoly on the mass media begin with "a regular column in the daily newspaper, perhaps, or an occasional programme exposing the [minority] language on radio or television" (2000:130). Within Bolivia, a

[1] Acronyms used in this paper include:
RQSC: *Red Quechua Satelital Continental* (Quechua Continental Satellite Network)
ERBOL: *Escuelas Radiofónicas de Bolivia* (Radiophonic Schools of Bolivia)
ALER: *Asociación Latinoamericana de Educación Radiofónica Red* (Latin American Association for Radiophonic Education)
CEPRA: *Centro de Producción Radiofónica* (Center for Radiophonic Production), Cochabamba, Bolivia

[2] Another fourth of Bolivia's population is made up of Aymara speakers. Though this paper focuses exclusively on Quechua and its recent entry into satellite broadcasting, the characterization of local-level indigenous-language radio is largely applicable to Aymara as well. For an early overview of the development of indigenous language radio in Bolivia, see Albó (1981); for a sociological analysis of Aymara-language radio in La Paz, see Archondo (1991); for an informative survey on the programming an listener demographics of ERBOL-affiliated stations, see Camacho (2000).

[3] Sociolinguistic overviews of Quechua include Albó (1995) and Plaza & Albó (1989) for Bolivia; Cerrón-Palomino (1989) and Hornberger (1988) for Peru; and Haboud (1998) and King (2001) for Ecuador. Broader reviews of the Quechua region as a whole include Colonel-Molina & Hornberger (forthcoming); Hornberger & King (2001); and von Gleich (1994).

Quechua-language newspaper (*Conosur Ñawpaqman*) recently celebrated its 18th anniversary of continuous publication, and two Spanish-language newspapers have regular weekly supplements in Quechua. Radio stations broadcasting at least partly in Quechua are numerous in both rural and urban areas, though in the city Quechua-language programs are usually limited to the early morning and evening hours. Programs include news summaries, soap operas and educational/public interest shows around topics of indigenous culture. Especially in rural areas, where phone and mail service is scarce to non-existent, much airtime is dedicated to personal messages such as birthday wishes, offers of properties for sale or rent, and messages to distant relatives. The 21 affiliated stations of ERBOL (*Escuelas Radiofónicas de Bolivia*), an umbrella group of indigenous language broadcasters, together account for 40% of all the kilowatts of radio broadcasting power in Bolivia.[4]

Indigenous language radio has also played a crucial role in Bolivian politics (cf. Archondo, 1991; Kuncar, 1989). During times of dictatorship and political unrest (which, until the "transition to democracy" less than two decades ago, were fairly constant), the *radios populares* or "people's radios" were essential to the organization of political resistance, especially the renowned stations controlled by the miners' unions. Government crackdowns on leftist activity often targeted these stations, destroying equipment and arresting or murdering radio personnel. In more recent years, Bolivia's *radios populares* have continued to play an essential role in popular organizing, especially in rural areas, by communicating information on meetings, marches, government abuses, voter mobilization, transmitting information from popular organizations to their membership, and in general "providing a voice to those without a voice" (Camacho, 2000).

This history is well known within Bolivia, and the presence of indigenous-language broadcasting is practically taken for granted there; but the current period of relative political tranquility (stressing the word "relative") has permitted Quechua broadcasting's leap to a new level: satellite. Since 1983, various Quechua- and Aymara-language stations in Bolivia had already begun to systematically exchange information and programming via CEPRA (*Centro de Producción Radiofónica*), in the city of Cochabamba; aside from producing original programming, CEPRA also serves as a centralized clearinghouse for programming produced by other ERBOL-affiliated stations. What originally began as a daily half-hour news program in Quechua, broadcast by all the affiliated stations, had by 1990 become the *Red Quechua Nacional* (National Quechua Network), operating via the ERBOL satellite. By 1994-95 the network was sharing programming more systematically around topics of general interest to a broader Quechua audience, with language revitalization as an explicit part of their instutional mission. At this point they expanded to become the *Red Quechua Satélite Continental*, with eleven affiliates in Bolivia, five in Peru and two in Ecuador, broadcasting via the satellite of the *Asociación Latinoamericana de Educación Radiofónica* (ALER). Currently there are two regular programs broadcast on the RQSC: a weekly half-hour news summary entitled *Jatun Llajta Misk'i Simi*,[5] and a daily five-minute bulletin entitled *Q'uriqinti* ("Hummingbird"). These programs are produced in the network headquarters, which rotates yearly between the three countries.

This rotation reflects not only the desire to distribute responsibility and participation in the production of programs among the network's member countries; it also represents an innovative approach to the issue of dialectal diversity. Understanding this issue requires a bit of background on Quechua dialectology. Though Quechua is habitually referred to as "a" language, it can more properly be considered a complex of some 7-17 languages (depending on different linguists' predilection for "lumping" or "splitting") (cf. Kaufman, 1994; Grinevald, 1998). While all of the Bolivian and southern Peruvian (Cuzco-Ayacucho) dialects are mutually intelligible, Ecuadorian Quichua is quite different from these, and central Peru is home to many varieties, several of which are mutually unintelligible (cf. Cerrón-Palomino 1987 for a more detailed description of Quechua dialectology). The diversity of Quechua has been one of the thorniest issues confronting language planners; in Perú, six different varieties were designated "official," while Ecuador and Bolivia each developed an expanded and unified national Quechua standard.[6] Though the rotating RQSC headquarters has operated out of different affiliates in both Bolivia and Ecuador, when in Peru it has always returned to Radio Sicuani of Cuzco; thus the only major dialectal difference they have had to consider is that between Southern Peruvian Quechua (which also includes the Bolivian varieties) and Ecuadorian Quichua.

This challenge has led to an interesting institutional arrangement: when the RQSC headquarters is in Peru or Bolivia, a Quichua programmer/announcer from Ecuador travels to the host country for a year to share broadcasting duties with his/her Peruvian or Bolivian counterpart; and when the headquaters rotates to Ecuador, a Peruvian or Bolivian programmer/announcer reciprocates this exchange. Programming, writing, recording and editing duties are shared between the two speakers, alternating (not translating) between their respective language varieties. Victor Pachecho of CEPRA, explains the process: *"El libreto lo hacen único, entonces cada quien escribe en su idioma y van alternando en los espacios de los programas... Nosotros inicialmente pensamos que tendríamos algunos problemas, pero ya estando en la práctica, no ha sido tan así... Las comunidades*

[4] Beltrán, Luis Ramiro & Jaime Reyes (1993). Radio popular en Bolivia: la lucha de obreros y campesinos para democratizar la comunicación. *Dialogos de la Comunicación*, 35(March), 14--31. Cited in Camacho (2000:Ch.III).

[5] *Jatun* – large; *llajta* – community or town; *misk'i* – sweet; *simi* – language.

[6] Though ostensibly regulating only written use, these national standards have been observed to affect oral usage as well. See Luykx (in preparation) for an analysis of the language ideologies and political and pedagogical debates around this process in Bolivia, and King (2001) on the Ecuadorian case.

campesinas que escuchan estos programas han logrado entender tambien de todo esto."[7]

The certainty of this last remark is hard to judge, since the financial, logistic, and topographical conditions under which the RQSC operates do not permit systematic investigation of the receiving end of their programming. Nevertheless, there is considerable anecdotal evidence supporting Pachecho's claim, in the form of listeners' correspondence with their local affiliated stations. One group of Ecuadorian listeners told members of their local station that, with practice, they were able to understand the Bolivian/Peruvian Quechua much better than before,[8] and one Bolivian announcer during her year in Ecuador received an impressive amount of fan mail and gifts from her Ecuadorian listeners. Also notable, aside from the steady stream of letters, is the amount of positive listener response that comes via more traditional Andean media: original songs composed in homage to local stations or the RQSC programming itself, textiles with the names of programs or announcers worked into the design, even engravings on stone. While it may of course be true that listeners who cannot easily understand "foreign" varieties of Quechua simply don't tune in, quite a significant number apparently do, and receive enough pleasure from the experience to make their satisfaction known.

The RQSC also uses some of its airtime to address language variation directly. As Victor Pachecho explains:

La política es llegar a todos los quechuas de otros países... Para aquello, la coordinadora de la red, del centro de producción de la red que está por hoy en el Perú, la tarea que ellos tienen es un poco ir por estas zonas, para un poco ver, de tomar contacto si hay alguna radio para que puedan también ser partícipe de esta red. Para que a través de esta radio podamos tambien llegar a esta gente que habla el quechua un tanto diferente. Para eso, ¿qué estamos haciendo, dentro de los programas? Tenemos un espacio de 'Entender la Palabra'; por decirte lanzamos en castellano, decir 'casa.' ¿Qué dicen en quechua en Bolivia 'casa'? ¿Cómo lo dicen en el Ecuador, cómo lo dicen en el Perú?... para digamos, tratar de comprender, entender todos estos dialectos o las formas de expresión del quechua. Entonces cada vez digamos es un poco más ampliado este programa, este espacio, donde ya estamos incluso jugando un poco los verbos, en castellano, en quechua y en quichua, para que la gente que escucha pueda darse cuenta de lo que estamos diciéndoles.[9]

It is notable that the network coordinators not only assume some knowledge of Spanish among their listening public (a fair assumption for the majority of Quechua speakers, though not all), but also use Spanish words as a bridge between different varieties of Quechua. At the same time, the RQSC's efforts do not seem to be particularly informed by the extensive academic scholarship that exists around Quechua. Like most Quechua speakers, Pachecho seemed unaware of the true extent of Quecuha's dialectal diversity, for instance in central Peru. While the RQSC's links with both peasant organizations and Quechua language advocates/activists are extensive, links with the scholarly community of university-trained linguists (more and more of whom are from Andean countries themselves) are not.[10] Nevertheless, this does not seem to be an obstacle to the work they carry out; in fact, the response among Quechua communities to the RQSC's version of grassroots language planning appears much more positive than most scholarly/governmental efforts, which have provoked endless controversy. Of course, schooling is a more inherently controversial undertaking than radio; schooling is obligatory and largely determinant of one's children's future, whereas if one doesn't like a particular radio station's approach to language, one can simply tune out. While the differing reactions to these very different types of language planning are partly explainable in terms of the context and ambitions of each, "official" language planners may nevertheless find valuable lessons in succesful non-governmental enterprises such as this one.

Interestingly, the lack of government support of of Quechua-language radio is apparently not perceived as a problem by those involved in it. When I asked Victor Pachecho to comment on the apparent lack of official interest in the topic, in contrast to the government's heavy investment in the use of Quechua in primary education and its professed interest in the revitalization of the country's indigenous languages more generally, he responded:

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[7] "They write a single script, each one writes in his/her language and they alternate during the program... We initially thought that we'd have some problems, but once in practice, we haven't really... The peasant communities that listen to these programs have also managed to understand all of it."

[8] A similar phenomenon occurred in the graduate program in which I currently teach (PROEIB Andes), which includes Quechua speakers from all three countries. Upon arrival, students had considerable difficulty understanding each other's language varieties, but after spending two years together in the program, mutual intelligibility had increased significantly.

[9] "The policy is to reach all the Quechuas in other countries... In order to do that, the network coordinator, the center of production which right now is in Peru, the task they have is to travel around a bit in those areas, to make contact if there's some radio station that maybe could become a member of the network. So that through that station we can also reach those people who speak Quechua differently. So what are we doing to that end, in the programs? We have a space for 'Understanding the Words'; for instance, we take a word in Spanish, 'house.' How do they say 'house' in Quechua in Bolivia? How do they say it in Ecuador, how do they say it in Peru?... in order to try to understand all these dialects or forms of expression in Quechua. So it's continually expanding, this segment; now we're playing around a bit with verbs, in Spanish, Quechua and Quichua, so that the people listening can understand all that we're saying to them."

[10] Though they have received some general orientation on linguistic and ideological questions from well-known academic linguists such as Xavier Albó and Luís Enrique López (Irma Severich [CEPRA], pesonal communication)

No, a nosotros no nos interesa tanto esta situación [state attempts to expand the functions of Quechua, that do not take radio into account]. *Lo que sí nos interesa es que, así como nosotros y el pueblo habla el quechua, podamos incidir en estos poderes como el gobierno, para que a través de su propio idioma, puedan ser escuchados en estos espacios de poder. Entonces yo creo que está digamos más el trabajo en ese camino, de, a través de la lengua; o sea, no es necesario que el Estado pueda tomar[nos] en cuenta, sino que más bien así como nosotros nos expresamos, que podamos incidir en el gobierno, para que podamos tener respuestas concretas a las demandas, a las iniciativas qué sé yo, del pueblo.*[11]

Additionally, recalling the oppositional role that indigenous language broadcasters have often played at the level of national politics, there are obviously important advantages to maintaining their independent status.

What are the implications of this activity for the maintenance and vitality of Quechua, and for the strengthening of Quechua language awareness among Quechua speakers? As was mentioned above, Quechua can be considered endangered, depite its impressive numbers in relation to many other minority languages. Indeed, those numbers may even impede revitalization efforts in the sense that many speakers do not believe that Quechua is endangered, since in many areas of the Andes "everyone speaks it." Nevertheless, the fact that many parents, especially in urban settings, are choosing not to socialize their children in Quechua, combined with intensifying rural-urban migration in all the countries where it is spoken, does not bode well for it's long-term survival.

In general, those involved in the RQSC see it very clearly as explicitly aimed toward language revitalization and awareness, with this goal linked in turn to the cultural and political demands of Quechua-speaking communities. As Pachecho defines CEPRA's mission:

Primero queremos recuperar, revalorizar el idioma quechua, fortalecerlo, y lo otro es que a través del idioma quechua podamos informar, educar a la población, a la audiencia, para fortalecer sus organizaciones campesinas, sus organizaciones, tanto de hombres como de mujeres. Pero lo importante como principal objetivo diríamos, es recuperar el idioma quechua, no es cierto, y fortalecerla.[12]

The link between the RQSC's sociolinguistic and political goals is a close one, and implies fomenting in Quechua speakers from different regions an awareness of both their differencesand their similarities. The internal linguistic variability of Quechua is presented to listeners in order to encourage broader mutual intelligibility and communication between Quechua communities; topics such as the political role of Quechua women and the struggles for indigenous land rights in the different countries where Quechua is spoken aim to construct a collective sense of identity and political/historical trajectory as a people. Another strategy toward this end is the use of numerous formats that revolve around active listener participation: interviews, surveys, debates, contests, etc., as well as the programs made up of personal messages to and from listeners and the use of *"reporteros populares"* or lay reporters. Listeners also participate by writing or calling their local station and attending events sponsored by the station, such as cultural, musical, or religious festivals, contests, educational and sports events, etc. (Camacho, 2000: Ch. 5). These participatory strategies have managed to create a sense of ownership among the listening public that most recent government initiatives have not. achieved. At the same time, they are spreading throughout their largely peasant audience ideas linked to developing global notions of citizenship, rights, and democratization (op.cit.:Ch. 2), through a channel that is largely independent of the hegemonic interests of nation-states.

A final question might be that of the sustainability of such a project, on its own terms and independent of government support. In this era in which Andean governments are more willing to support indigenous language revitalization initiatives, the temptation to seek such support may present itself. Nevertheless, Quechua radio's independent status has been crucial to its political role (not that this has been monolithic), and doubtless accounts for much of its credibility with its audience. While local radio stations are self-supporting, coordination of the RQSC is supported by ALER, which is turn is supported by cooperative agencies from Europe (most notably Holland and Germany). In the sense that dependence on external aid makes such an enterprise vulnerable to the vagaries of distant politics and economies, this situation may not be ideal; and yet it seems to be the only feasible one for the present time.

While use in the home is key to a language's survival, its presence in the wider community is hardly less important. Quechua-language radio provides a common reference point for this linguistic presence in the daily lives of innumerable communities, and the move to satellite network broadcasting links those local communities to others in a conscious, positive, and unprecedented way. The conquest of South America by Europeans over five hundred years ago marked the end of the united Quechua polity that was the Inka Empire. Since then, the notion of a "united Quechua people" has remained more political

[11] "No, we're not really interested in that situation. What does interest us is that, since both we and the people speak Quechua, we might influence those powers such as the government, so that the people can be heard in their own language, in those spaces of power. So I think our work is more along those lines, that is, through the language; it's not necessary that the state take it into account, rather that we, with our own way of expressing ourselves, might have an impact in the government and get concrete answers to the demands and the initiatives of the people."

[12] "First we want to recover and revalorize the Quechua language, strengthen it, and the other [goal] is that through the language we can inform and educate the population, the audience, strengthening the peasant organizations, both the men's and the women's. But the important thing, the principal objective one might say, is to recover and strengthen the Quechua language."

utopia than ethnic or sociolinguistic reality, the RQSC represents a concrete step toward that goal, in a framework not of empire, but of an active and participatory democracy.

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Les Médias et la Déformation du Nom Propre Berbère

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Résumé

Les noms propres (noms de personnes, de groupes et de lieux) sont des signes importants de la langue qui nous révèlent des aspects fondamentaux de la mentalité d'un groupe ou d'une société.
Le rôle du nom propre dans la société berbère du sud-ouest du Maroc (plaine de Souss, Haut-Atlas occidental, Anti-Atlas et les zones pré-sahariennes) n'est pas seulement de numéroter et d'étiqueter les individus et les groupes, mais il est l'expression d'une identité territoriale. En d'autres termes, pour cette société, comme pour la plupart des sociétés humaines, les noms de personnes et les noms de lieux ont toujours eu des rapports d'interdépendance : un territoire est souvent dénommé à partir du nom du groupe qui occupe ce territoire, et en revanche, un individu ou une famille tire son nom d'après le nom de sa localité de résidence, de sa province ou de son pays natal.
Actuellement, la plupart de ces noms propres berbères se sont arabisés et perdent ainsi leurs propres caractéristiques morphologiques. Parfois, ces noms sont modifiés à tel point qu'il est très difficile de les identifier. Ce processus d'arabisation du nom propre berbère connaît aussi un autre aspect qui consiste à traduire en langue arabe les formes de base berbères. Ce procédé a été largement utilisé et diffusé par les médias. Le nom propre berbère souffre donc de mauvais traitements et de déformations.
La toponymie urbaine d'origine berbère a connu à travers l'histoire des altérations et des transformations qui ont entraîné de sérieuses répercussions sur le nom propre berbère. Beaucoup de toponymes berbères sont aujourd'hui disparus et sont en effet tombés dans l'oubli.
Dans notre contribution, nous voulons montrer comment les médias ont contribué à ce processus de "destruction" du nom propre berbère.

La Langue Berbère et l'Arabisation

Le monde berbère est un domaine géographique très vaste qui comprend l'ensemble de l'Afrique du nord, le Sahara et les zones sub-sahariennes. Ce monde berbère englobe actuellement plusieurs pays (presque une dizaine) ayant des conditions socio-économiques et politiques très variées, et des populations qui présentent une grande diversité dans leur mode de vie. Le Maroc et l'Algérie sont deux pays qui comptent les populations berbères les plus importantes.

Depuis des siècles, le berbère ne constitue plus une communauté linguistique homogène. Dans cette aire géographique du monde berbère, nous avons plutôt des régions berbérophones ou chaque parler évolue d'une façon spécifique et indépendante des autres parlers. Entre ces différentes régions berbères, c'est l'arabe dialectal *ddarija* qui est en usage.

Le Maroc, comme l'ensemble du Maghreb, connaît un processus d'arabisation linguistique depuis des le Moyen Age. Le critère de la langue ne constitue plus actuellement le critère déterminant pour identifier les populations berbères, car, pour des raisons diverses (absence du berbère dans l'enseignement, arabisation intense, émigration, etc.) une bonne partie de ces populations perdent de plus en plus leur langue. La majorité des locuteurs arabophones marocains, y compris ceux qui se considèrent arabes, ne sont donc que des berbères arabisés. Rappelons ici que le fond de la population du Maroc est d'origine berbère.

L'Arabe, Langue du Pouvoir et de la Religion

A partir des années 60, juste après l'indépendance, le processus d'arabisation s'est accentué au Maroc. C'est à partir de cette époque que le berbère est complètement marginalisé et maltraité par les membres du Mouvement national. Ce mouvement a mené une politique linguistique franchement hostile à la langue et à la culture berbères. Selon le discours idéologique de ce mouvement, l'identité marocaine se définit par deux entités : l'arabe et l'Islam. Pour les défenseurs de ce mouvement, l'arabe, c'est la langue du pouvoir et de la religion. C'est à cette période que l'arabe s'est imposé dans une bonne partie des institutions publiques (éducation, justice, information, etc.). L'identité berbère est ainsi complètement ignorée par le discours idéologique panarabiste du mouvement national. Les médias dont dispose ce mouvement jouent un rôle décisif dans la propagande de cette hostilité envers la langue et la culture berbères.

Au cours des années 70, les premières associations pour la défense de la langue et la culture berbères ont vu le jour au Maroc. C'est à cette époque aussi que

nous avons les premières publications associatives berbères (domaine techelhit). La question de l'identité devient le thème qui prédomine dans les écrits des auteurs comme M. Moustaoui, H. Id Belkacem, A. Azaykou, B. Akhiat, etc. Le premier recueil poétique tachelhit est paru en 1974. Il s'agit d'Imuzzar de M. Moustaoui. A partir des années 80, plusieurs revues et journaux berbères ont vu le jour : Amazigh, Anarouz, Tasafout, Amud, Tamunt, Adrar, Tifawin, Tifinagh.

Le Nom Propre Berbère

Les noms propres (noms de personnes, de groupes et de lieux) sont des signes importants de la langue qui nous révèlent des aspects fondamentaux de la mentalité d'un groupe ou d'une société. Dans une société traditionnelle, les noms propres restent une source essentielle pour la compréhension du milieu social et de l'évolution de certains modèles sociaux.

Autrefois, chez les Ichelhiyn, populations berbères du sud-ouest du Maroc, le nom de la personne (anthroponyme) et le nom du groupe (ethnonyme) étaient l'expression de l'identité des individus et des groupes. Un anthroponyme fait appel au territoire et au groupe auxquels appartient l'individu. Un ethnonyme est considéré comme l'emblème du groupe. Le rôle du nom propre dans cette société n'est pas seulement de numéroter et d'étiqueter les individus et les groupes, mais il est l'expression d'une identité territoriale. En d'autres termes, pour cette société, comme pour la plupart des sociétés humaines, les noms de personnes et les noms de lieux ont toujours eu des rapports d'interdépendance : un territoire est souvent dénommé à partir du nom du groupe qui occupe ce territoire, et en revanche, un individu ou une famille tire son nom d'après le nom de sa localité de résidence, de sa province ou de son pays natal.
Exemple : Idaw Tanan, désigne à la fois le nom du groupe et le nom du territoire (l'extrême ouest du Haut-Atlas occidental) occupé par ce groupe. Un individu originaire des Idaw Tanan est désigné par des individus appartenant à d'autres groupes par le nom Atanan, fém. Tatanant, ou Gg° Idaw Tanan, fém. Ultt Idaw Tanan (litt. fils / fille des Idaw Tanan)

D'une manière générale, chez les Ichelhiyn, les ethnonymes (noms donnés aux groupes) fonctionnent aussi comme des toponymes (noms de lieux). On ne peut donc dissocier l'ethnonymie de la toponymie. Chaque groupe s'identifie à son territoire de résidence d'où l'importance de la référence spatiale dans les critères d'appartenance à un groupe ethnique. Cette appartenance au groupe est basée sur le principe de la co-résidence : les individus appartiennent à un même groupe lorsqu'ils partagent un même territoire *tamazirt*.

Nos enquêtes dans le milieu rural du sud-ouest du Maroc (plaine de Souss, Haut-Atlas occidental, Anti-Atlas et les zones pré-saharlennes) nous ont montré que les membres d'un même groupe se sentent solidaires davantage par leurs liens territoriaux que par leurs liens de parenté (sang). Les gens des Achtoukn par exemple, dans la plaine de Souss, se définissent non pas par une unité de filiation généalogique *tag°matt*, mais en référence à leur territoire *tamazirt n'Wachtoukn*. Dans beaucoup de circonstances, nous avons remarqué que, pour s'identifier, les gens mentionnent d'abord leur territoire d'origine.

Aujourd'hui, certaines familles qui ont gardé leur nom d'origine géographique l'ont adopté comme véritable nom de famille. Ces noms sont ainsi officiellement inscrits à l'Etat civil. Ces noms sont donc intégrés dans le système onomastique actuel composé du nom d'origine géographique (devenu désormais nom de famille) + prénom individuel. Nous avons des exemples comme Abudrar Mbark; Abaâqil Brahim; etc. Ces noms restent toujours, à l'époque actuelle, révélateurs de l'identité territoriale et sociale des individus.

Déformation du Nom Propre Berbère

Ces noms rigoureusement déterminés par le système social, côtoient de plus en plus ces jours-ci des noms nouveaux sans aucune référence géographique ou territoriale. Le nom de famille de l'époque moderne est une création récente de l'Etat civil et de l'administration coloniale. Nous rappelons ici que c'est le dahir du 8 mars 1950 qui a institué un état civil obligatoire pour les Marocains et il a imposé en même temps la confirmation du nom de famille. Ce nom crée pour satisfaire l'administration s'est beaucoup éloigné de la fonction fondamentale d'un anthroponyme dans la société traditionnelle à savoir un signe caractérisant un individu ou une famille et non pas une simple étiquette.

La mise en place d'un Etat civil et l'enregistrement obligatoire des anthroponymes ont totalement bouleversé d'une manière brutale l'identité réelle des individus. Nous avons ainsi une rupture radicale entre l'identité réelle assignée par les parents ou le groupe d'un côté et l'identité "artificielle" inscrite dans l'Etat civil de l'autre. Les exemples de cette dissociation entre l'identité vécue et l'identité reçue sont nombreux aujourd'hui dans le Souss et même dans les milieux ruraux. Dans l'Anti-Atlas occidental par exemple, on relève beaucoup de noms de famille qui reflètent ce phénomène de la dissolution de l'identité des individus. Nous avons en effet des situations extraordinaires (parfois choquantes) comme cette famille d'Ayt Baha (nord-ouest de l'Anti-Atlas) qui s'est attribuée un anthroponyme fassi (de Fès, ville impériale) *Ben Chqrun*.

L'administration actuelle a donc créé des noms véritablement dépersonnalisés en remplaçant le système anthroponymique qui était bien établi par les membres de la société. Ce nouveau système officiel a pour but, à ne pas douter, de détruire l'identité et les valeurs locales. Le résultat, c'est que beaucoup de

familles dans cette région ont perdu leur anthroponyme authentique, en tant que signes motivés qui renforcent les liens d'appartenance des individus à un territoire ou à un groupe. Ils ont à leur place des noms étrangers.

Cette situation malsaine a été largement alimentée par les médias. Ces derniers ont beaucoup contribué à la déformation et à la destruction du nom propre berbère. La plupart des anthroponymes berbères sont utilisés sous une forme arabe. En effet, beaucoup de ces noms propres berbères ont subit l'arabisation et perdent ainsi leurs propres caractéristiques morphologiques. Parfois, ces noms sont modifiés à tel point qu'il est très difficile de les identifier. Il est à noter que ce processus de morphologisation arabe du nom propre berbère (anthroponymes, toponymes et ethnonymes) est connu dans cette région du Maroc depuis des siècels; probablement à partir de l'époque des Almoravides au Xème siècle.

L'examen de ces formes arabisées illustre les différents procédés morphologiques et phonétiques utilisés par les médias. L'article arabe *al-* (et les variantes *a-*, *el-*, *e-*) et le suffixe *-i* sont souvent ajoutés au mot berbère :

Al-Baâmrani < Abaâmran
Al-Ifrani < Ifran (Anti-Atlas occidental)
Al-Baâqili < Idw Baâqil („ „ „)
Al-Jazouli < Iguizuln („ „ „)
Al-Boudrari < Abudrar (adra = montagne)
A-Tanani < Idw Tanan
Al-Ksimi < Aksimn (extrême ouest du Haut-Atlas)

D'autres procédés morphologiques sont utilisés dans la déformation des anthroponymes berbères. Voici quelques exemples :

Chtouka - Hachtouka < Achtoukn
Hilala < Ilaln (-Atlas occidental)
Sanhaji < Iznagn
Etc.

Nous constatons ici que les noms berbères sont complétement modifiés. Le nom propre berbère souffre de mauvais traitements et de déformations de la part des médias.

La toponymie est la discipline de convergence de la linguistique, de la géographie et de l'histoire. Les études toponymiques ont démontré comment une meilleure connaissance des noms de lieu pouvait contribuer à l'étude diachronique de la langue d'une société, de son espace et de son histoire.

La toponymie d'origine berbère a connu à travers l'histoire des altérations et des transformations qui ont entrainé de sérieuses répercussions sur le nom propre berbère :

Massa < Masst
Goulmim < Aglmim
Zagoura < Tazagurt Etc.

Aujourd'hui, la toponymie berbère des milieux urbains est menacée de disparition. Nous assistons actuellement, dans toute la région du Souss, à un phénomène de "destruction" des noms berbères, mené par l'administration et les médias. Ce phénomène consiste à éliminer les anciens toponymes berbères pour les remplacer par des noms arabes. C'est le cas par exemple de Foum Lhsn qui est la traduction arabe de Imi n-Ugadir (Dans le Bani).

Beaucoup de toponymes berbères sont disparus et tombés dans l'oubli. L'urbanisation et les médias constituent des facteurs destructeurs de ces toponymes berbères. Nous manquons de listes de ces noms de lieux qui précisent leurs formes anciennes historiquement classées et répertoriées. Ces recueils sont indispensables pour l'étude des milieux urbains et leur évolution au cours de l'histoire.

En examinant la toponymie actuelle de certains milieux urbains du sud-ouest du Maroc, on constate que la plupart de ces toponymes sont vides de sens et n'ont aucun rapport avec l'organisation socio-culturelle et linguistique des populations de ce lieu. La substitution des toponymes berbères par d'autres dans les milieux urbains constitue un effacement de la mémoire collective de la communauté.

Restitution de la forme originale des noms propres berbères

Actuellement, cette déformation du nom propre berbère par les médias provoque de plus en plus une certaine inquiétude dans les milieux intellectuels berbères. Ainsi, pour lutter contre l'agression que subit le nom propre berbère en général, quelques universitaires et chercheurs dans le domaine berbère examinent la question de la restitution des formes berbères[1]. En effet, dans le cadre de l'aménagement linguistique de la langue berbère, la restitution de la forme originale des noms propres berbères devient aujourd'hui l'un des objectifs immédiats : Ag°lmim au lieu de Gulimin, Imi n-Ugadir au lieu de Fum Lhsn, Targant au lieu de Argana, Ilaln au lieu de Hilala, Achtoukn au lieu de Chtouka, .. etc.

[1] Dans ce sens, nous citons la rencontre de l'Atelier «Aménagement linguistique de la langue berbère», 5-9 octobre 1998 à l'Inalco (Paris). Parmi les recommandations et les propositions faites dans cet atelier est celle de créer un domaine de recherches concernant l'onomastique berbère. Il a été décidé aussi de créer le Réseau International pour l'Aménagement de la langue berbère, rattaché au Centre de Recherche Berbère de l'Inalco.

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Silenced or Liberated: Endangered Languages Within The European Union

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Abstract

This article explores the huge disparity in mass media currently available to speakers of non-state indigenous languages within the European Union. It compares the availability of print and broadcast media in Finland Swedish, Sami, Catalan, Basque, Breton, Occitan, Corsican, Sardinian, Ladin, and Frisian. It seeks the causes of the disparity, touching on wider issues of language status, political and financial support, and having an audience – the latter dependent above all on bilingual education. The article then looks at differing responses to the lack – or otherwise – of mother tongue media, and the future, which may lie in the EU.

Introduction

The existence of an outlet in radio, TV or print is vital to the survival of an endangered language. Mass media enable speakers not only to communicate, educate and entertain in their mother tongue, but also to improve the status of the language, to promote culture and traditions, and to prevent creative people from disappearing to metropolises where that minority language is not spoken, and is soon forgotten. Above all, through the media a people can forge a common identity, which is crucial in preventing the death of a language.

Within the EU people in around forty different communities - about 50 million people - speak a language which is not that of the state. This does not include the more recent immigrants. All these territorially-based non-state languages are endangered, if not already moribund.

During eighteen months spent visiting many of these peoples, I was struck by the huge disparity in mass media available to them in their mother tongues. While the Ålanders in Finland can access a wide variety of media in every form entirely in Swedish, the Sardinians media is entirely Italian. While the Catalans in Spain are provided with a plethora of publications and broadcasts in Catalan, the Catalans in France have virtually nothing.

What explains this disparity? Fundamentally, it is the status of the language – its prestige within both within its own community and as it is perceived by outsiders. Many people – even the speakers themselves - see a non-state language as a relic from a more primitive past, as an obstacle to social advancement and physical mobility. They are ashamed of it, and wish to distance themselves from it. Thus language death is often an act of suicide as much as murder.

Another problem – and solution – is education. Obviously there is no point in providing media if there is no audience for it. And there can be no audience – or only a dwindling elderly one – unless there is education in that language, and an attempt at standardisation. To go in depth into the benefits and ramifications of bilingual education is a subject for another conference; however it is interesting to note how closely an extensive provision of mother tongue education ties up with an extensive provision of mother tongue media.

However, neither education nor the media that are dependent on it can flourish without support, both political and financial. This is necessary both within central and regional governments, and on the ground. Again, there is a huge range of such support within the EU. This problem is exacerbated by the fact that many speakers of endangered languages within the EU are spread across more recent national frontiers, some of them outside the EU.

Finland Swedish

Media Availability[1]

Starting with the positive, the most successful of the EU's minorities are the inhabitants of the Åland Islands. The Ålands are an archipelago of some 6000 islands that link Sweden and Finland across the Gulf of Bothnia. Ålanders are Finnish citizens, but they speak Swedish. All media available to them are monolingually Swedish, even though Finland is officially bilingual, and even though Ålanders constitute less than 0.5% of the entire Finnish population, a mere 25,000 people.

Status

Ålanders have always been proud of their Swedish tongue. Ever since Sweden conquered Finland in the 12th century Swedish has been the language of high status in Finland. The Swedes became Finland's urban elite, the bourgeois traders, industrialists and shippers, as well as the colonial aristocracy, while Finnish was relegated to the low-status language of the backward masses. The Ålanders know that their islands are small, but they are rich; their language is a minority tongue in Finland but it

[1] Statistics from a survey commissioned by the EU, carried out in 1992-3 by the Catalan Institute of Sociolinguistics (Barcelona), the Centre for Research into Multilingualism (Brussels) and the Research Centre of Wales (Bangor), published in 1996

is the language of the former rulers of Finland, and now of a powerful neighbour.

Education

It is telling that the Åland Islands have no bilingual education. Although the islands are Finnish, education is entirely in Swedish. The Åland Government argues that it is of no use to teach Swedish; the pupils must be taught *in* Swedish. Such is the success of the islands' autonomy that most pupils wishing to learn a second language tend to choose English rather than Finnish, and go to university in Stockholm rather than Helsinki.

Political support

The Åland Statute of Autonomy stipulates that although Finland is officially bilingual in Finnish and Swedish, the Ålands are monolingually Swedish. Between the 1950s and 1970s Ålanders' political speeches frequently referred to the threat of imminent 'Finnification'; Finnish speakers became the enemy, and people refer to that period as the time of the 'language war'. These days relations with mainland Finland are far more cordial, but the Åland Government is so determined to maintain the Swedish language that there is even a law preventing anyone from buying property on the islands unless they are Finnish citizens who have lived for at least five years on the islands and can prove their fluency in Swedish.

Sami

Media availability

At the other extreme both physically and in terms of media availability, yet within the same country, languish the Sami. The indigenous peoples of the northernmost wastes of Sweden, Finland, Norway, and the Kola Peninsula of Russia, the Sami number around 70-101,000 people, approximately 0.5% of the total national populations (according to surveys carried out between 1989 and 1992).

A problem for Sami media is that numerous different and mutually unintelligible language groups co-exist within this area. However, the majority - some 70-80% of Sami speakers - speaks North Sami. These are able to listen across national frontiers to up to 7 hours per day of public radio broadcasts in North Sami, mostly news and current affairs, while private radio stations broadcast from Norway can be picked up in Finland and Sweden. Although Norwegian television has started to feature children's programmes in Sami on a weekly basis, Sami television is still rare. As for print media, there is no daily newspaper in Sami, but there is a free monthly periodical called *Sapmelas*, produced entirely in Sami in Helsinki, and since 1989 a magazine called *Anaras* has appeared in Inari Sami twice a year. This is despite the fact that in 1997 only 400 speakers of Inari Sami remained alive. Two Norwegian Sami language weeklies also reach the Finnish Sami.

Alf-Isak Keskitalo, the Sami curator of the museum in the Sami stronghold of Guovdageainnu in Norway, writes a weekly article for his local paper in Sami. For him, the number of readers has become a sort of bench mark for the survival of Sami as an everyday language. He sees the number of readers dwindling. He declares that when they no longer read his work, he will declare Sami dead, and leave Samiland.

Status

In the eighteenth century, Sami was condemned by Lutheran missionaries as 'the Devil's tongue', the evil talk of pagan shamans. To be acceptable in the eyes of God it became necessary for the Sami to abandon their mother tongue. Then, to be acceptable in the eyes of fellow citizens it became necessary to be assimilated by the majority population. Recently, many people who were mocked at school for speaking Sami have deliberately not passed on the language to their children. Oula Valkeapää, a young lawyer working for the Finnish Sami parliament in Inari/Anar, whose uncle is the award-winning militant Sami author and composer Nils-Alsak Valkeapää, was brought up entirely in Finnish. However, times are changing and like many young Sami he regrets this lack, and has learnt Sami in adulthood. It has now become more fashionable to be Sami.

Education

Although Sami has been formally legitimised as a language of instruction since 1991 in Finland, there are no Sami-medium schools, and only one in Norway. Again, there is the problem not just of standardisation of dialects within one language, but of completely distinct languages, all of them spoken by tiny numbers, many of whom are dispersed across national boundaries, including over the former Iron Curtain.

Political support

Since 1992 Norwegian and Finnish administrative and legal documents can be in Sami, and the Nordic Sami Council, which acts on behalf of all the Sami of Fenno-Scandia, is of central importance in sustaining Sami rights, language and culture. But on the ground the will is not there to put that legislation and support into practice. Officials at the Guovdageainnu municipal office, and even the mayor himself, cannot speak Sami. According to Alf-Isak Keskitalo, if those politicians want to promote Sami, they have the legal power to do so, but they don't. As he put it, 'they must have a hole in the head.'

Catalan

After the Ålanders, the Catalans in Spain have been the most successful. Data from a 1991 census shows that Catalans account for 15.5% of Spain's population, i.e. 6 million people, and of them 94% understand Catalan, 68% speak it, 68% read it, and 40% can write it. Most Catalan speakers use the language daily. They are offered seven daily newspapers published entirely in Catalan, with a total circulation of 136,700, and numerous periodicals

with a total circulation of 134,400. Five public radio stations broadcast around the clock solely in Catalan, alongside an astonishing 192 municipal radio stations which broadcast 80% in Catalan. Four public TV channels broadcast throughout Catalonia and of them, two *Televisió de Catalunya* channels (TV3 and *Canal 33*) broadcast entirely in Catalan. TV3 is watched by 42% of the audience and *Canal 33* by 14%.

A miserable contrast is with Catalan in France, where there is virtually no media whatsoever available in Catalan.

Status

Catalan, a language that was almost wiped out under Franco, has bounced back with extraordinary vitality in Spain, to the point where immigrants from the rest of Spain now readily adopt Catalan as their first language. In France it is dismissed as a mere *patois*.

Education

In the Spanish part of Catalonia it is now virtually impossible to educate your child in any language other than Catalan. The Law on Language Standardisation in Catalonia (1983) states that Catalan is the language of education at all levels, although all children in Catalonia should also be able to use Spanish normally by the end of primary education, and teachers must know both languages. In the 1992-3 academic year, Catalan was the main teaching language for 73% of state school secondary pupils, and 74% of private school pupils, and that seems to be increasing all the time.

Political support

Jordi Pujol, the Catalan freedom fighter and now President of Catalonia, defined Catalanism in his book *Construir Catalunya*, 1980, as 'a fact of mentality, of language, of feelings. It is a historic fact, and it is a fact of spiritual ethnicity. Finally, it is a fact of will.' That will – which does not exist in French Catalonia – is in full force in Spanish Catalonia. The Autonomous Statute of Catalonia (1979) states that 'the language of Catalonia shall be Catalan, that the Catalan language shall be the official language of Catalonia alongside Spanish which is the official language of the Spanish state'. Its success is such that today it is Spanish-speakers who feel victimised, and who spray Spanish toponyms on road signs. The Generalitat financially assists Catalan-medium radio broadcasting, and the written press.

Basque

Media Disparity

The Basques have fared less well. The 1991 census showed that 660,000 people speak Basque, of whom 80,000 live on the French side, and the rest on the Spanish side. Until 1986 all newspapers in the Spanish Basque Country were in Spanish, then two bilingual newspapers appeared, *Deia* (circulation 106,000) and *Egin* (103,000), although Basque still makes up less that 25% of their content. *Euskaldunon Egunkaria*, the first newspaper published exclusively in Basque, and distributed over all the Basque regions, appeared in 1990, but its readership is minuscule – a mere
0.9% of the entire newspaper readership. Three Basque-only magazines claim a total circulation of 14,000.

Radio is mostly in Spanish, but an increase in the number of local radio stations in recent years has led to an increased use of Basque in broadcasting, although only *Euskadi Irratia*, a public radio station, broadcasts entirely in Basque, with 84,000 listeners. Crucial to the survival of Basque has been the creation of *Euskal Telebista* (ETB) whose first channel transmits exclusively in Basque, with an audience of 207,000 – i.e. 11% of the market.

Status

Unlike Catalonia, the Basque Country had traditionally seen hostility between non-Basque speaking in-comers, and Basque speakers. Basque, being a non Indo-European language, was feared by immigrants as too difficult to learn, while Basque-speakers kept the immigrants at bay, fearing the threat to their language and thus to their morality and their very existence. Like Catalan, Basque was severely repressed by Franco, but managed to survive, and even achieve martyr status. Knowledge of Basque remains a defining characteristic of Basqueness, but during recent years violence came to be seen as an even more convincing Basque trait.

Education

In Spain the number of Basque-medium schools has also dramatically risen in the post-Franco era. Pupils can choose between:
A Being taught all subjects in Spanish with a class of Basque.
B. Half and half.
D. All subjects taught in Basque with a class of Spanish.
(Note the omission of 'C', there being no letter C in Basque.) However, the large number of Spanish-speaking immigrants means that Basque-medium teaching is unlikely to take off, even though it is supported by the Basque Government, and even though the language is required for certain jobs. In France there are private Ikastolak, where Basque is the teaching medium, but on a tiny scale.

Political support

Basque is co-official with Spanish within the Basque autonomous Region, which was created out of the provinces of Vizcaya, Guipuzcoa and Alava in 1979. Basque can be used in government documents and publications. By contrast – but predictably – Basque does not enjoy any such rights in the French Basque Country. However, there are a growing number of cross-border activities that are attempting to bring the two Basque regions together, both politivally (through the PNV, the Basque Nationalist Party), and through industrial enterprises.

Frisian

Media availability

Frisian is like Ladin, Basque, Catalan, and Sami in that its speakers are spread across state frontiers. Although there is a Frisian Council, there is very ltter other communication between the different communities. North Frisian (Friisk) is spoken by around 10,000 people on the North Sea coast of Schleswig-Holstein in Germany; East Frisian is spoken by a dwindling 2000 people in the Saterland of north west Saxony; West Frisian (Frysk) is spoken by a healthy 400,000 people in the northern Netherlands.

North Frisian is dominated by German and Danish, both the German and Danish press occasionally condescend to publish in North Frisian – but at most half a page per month. There is a North Frisian magazine, but this is irregularly published, and there is only minimal use of North Frisian on the radio. (North German Radio broadcasts two minutes of news each week in North Frisian). There is no North Frisian TV. The media is hampered by a lack of standardisation: dialects are mutually unintelligible from island to island, even from village to village.

In West Frisian the situation is slightly less dire. Two daily papers, the *Leeuwarder Courant* and the *Friesch Dagblad* (circ 152,000) publish some reports in Frisian. Six magazines are published entirely in Frisian. Until 1994 just 30 hours were broadcast in Frisian on TV, but that is now up to 2 hours per day, while a radio station broadcasts about 70 hours a week entirely in Frisian.

Status

Although Frisians in the Netherlands are proud of their language, it is more the idea of that language than actually studying or using it, except with older people. Emigration of Frisians, mostly across the Atlantic, and immigration of 'Hollanders' has lowered the status of the language further. North Frisian in Schleswig-Holstein has also suffered from emigration, and immigration of German-speakers and tourists, and from being squeezed out by the powerful Danish minority.

Education

Frisian in the Netherlands is taught in some pre-schools, and since the 1955 amendment of the Dutch Education Act, Frisian can be used as a medium of instruction in lower grades. In 1974 it was made a compulsory subject in all Friesland primary schools, but as there is no Government curriculum, it is up to schools to choose whether or not they teach in Frisian – and few make that choice. Dutch is the general medium of secondary education. In North Friesland there is only one primary school where it is possible to be taught in Frisian, in the small town of Risum.

Political support

While the Dutch national government has a policy of repressive tolerance towards Frisian, the Provincial Government of Friesland does actively promote the language and culture. Likewise, the German government has no official policy towards North Frisian, but the 1990 constitution of the State of Schleswig Holstein does make provision for the support of the North Frisian population, with a Council for Frisian Affairs. In practice, this means very little, and certainly does not support any North Frisian media. The North Frisians have never had any political unity amongst themselves.

Ladin

Media availability

Ladin is spoken in the remoter Dolomitic valleys of Italy's South Tyrol, as well as in Switzerland where it is known as Rhaeto-Romansch. The total number of Ladin speakers in Italy is around 30,000, mostly concentrated in the beautiful Val Badia, where 95% of the population has Ladin as its mother tongue. Nevertheless, the tiny number of speakers means that there are no daily newspapers in Ladin, and only one journal, *La Usc di Ladins*, which appears weekly in Ladin, with a circulation of 3000. The Italian radio station RA1 broadcasts a mere 41/2 hours a week in Ladin, but there are local radio stations, including *Radio Gherdëina*, which broadcasts 4 hours a week in Ladin. As for television, the Italian station RA1 broadcasts a mere 10 minutes a week in Ladin, and 30 minutes every third week.

Status

Despite their small numbers, the Autonomous Statute for Bolzano and Trentino (1972) has given the Ladin a certain status in the Bolzano Province, with proportional representation in the provincial government. They also benefit from the fact that they live in a multi-lingual community, where to speak the language which is not that of the state is fully acceptable. Nevertheless, they are still excluded from numerous important committees, such as the Budget Committees in the Provincial parliament and Regional Councils. Like the Frisians, they suffer from being dispersed over a wide area. While estuaries and the North Sea divide the Frisians, the Ladin are divided from each other by mountain ranges. This prevents them from getting together to press for their rights.

Education

Italian has been compulsory in Italy at all levels of education as the teaching medium since 1859. Since 1985 the state has recognised the right to learn the local language at primary school and in the lower years of secondary school. But in reality these languages play a minuscule role in schools. In the Province of Bolzano Ladin is the main language of nursery school in the valleys where most Ladin speakers live, such as the Val Badia. In primary schools Ladin features in the first year, while from the second year Italian or German are the medium of instruction, leaving Ladin to be taught a maximum of two hours each week.

Political support

Thanks to the success of the Ladin tourist industry (skiing), wealthy Ladin speakers have managed to

exercise more political clout than would normally be allowed to such a tiny minority. They have also been helped by the fact that the South Tyrol is already linguistically diverse, with German speakers making up more than two thirds of the population, and Italian speakers the rest. As a result, a Presidential Decree (no. 691) was passed in January 1973 officially permitting Ladin in mass media in Bolzano Province, where the majority of Ladin-speakers live. Bolzano also has to ensure that transmissions can be received from Ladin-speaking areas abroad. There are numerous organisations devoted to the preservation of Ladin, and in Bolzano Ladin is supported in schools and the public media by Provincial funding, which includes payment of a 'trilingualism allowance' to public servants. Nevertheless, in reality language expansion has never been exploited at a political level, and cultural activities are few and far between.

Occitan

Media availability

Occitan is spoken across the southern third of France. Of a population of 13 million, a 1992 survey carried out in Languedoc-Roussillon suggested that around 3 million can hold a brief conversation in Occitan, 2.6 million use it from time to time, and 2 million use it with family and friends. This relatively high figure is not served by a single newspaper. Some newspapers such as *La Marseillaise* include one page in Occitan per week, while some 20 or so periodicals do use Occitan, especially those associated with language militants or with cultural and literary subjects, but they appear only 2-6 times per year. No public radio station broadcasts in Occitan, and very few private radio stations. The public channel *France 3* treats television viewers to a handsome 40 minutes per week in Occitan, while private TV channels include no Occitan at all, except for a very few local transmissions.

Status

Provençal was a great language of civilisation and culture, the literary language of the troubadours, and until the fifteenth century a language of law and administration. Linguists now refer to it as Occitan, reserving 'Provençal' for the dialect of the historic region of Provence. Although elderly residents of the village of Cabasse, in Central Var, happily speak Occitan amongst themselves, and occasionally behind the back of some irritating foreigner, amongst Francophones they often suffer from a sense of shame. This was instilled at school when speaking Provençal was a punishable offence, a sign of bovine peasant origins, and something to be mocked. Although it is no longer punishable, it still has no prestige, is dismissed as a mere *patois*. This prevents it from reviving as a language in its own right, deserving of a media of its own. Breton and French Basque have had the same experience.

Education

The French State gives little or no support to bilingual education. The Diexonne act of 1951 permitted the minimal presence of regional languages in public education, and left the door open for the creation of private schools teaching in the local minority language. However, in the Occitan-speaking region, the private 'Calendretas' teach a tiny minority of nursery children in Occitan, and these pupils have no guarantee that they can progress to primary or secondary education in their mother tongue. There is also no state-funded teacher training in Occitan.

Political support

The French state completely lacks the necessary 'fact of will' to support its endangered languages. All of France's minority languages have been victimised by France's repressive language laws. French is the only language admitted in court, and French is the only language used by the state. According to the 1992 Constitutional Reform, 'French is the (only) language of the Republic'. Since the French Revolution, the French language has been considered the essence of Frenchness; as a result the French state regards its lesser-used languages with hostile tolerance.

Breton

Media availability

Basse Bretagne, the traditional home of the Breton language, has a population of 1,514,694, of whom approximately 18,000 use the language on an everyday basis, and approximately another 140,000 use it sometimes, with the percentage dramatically decreasing among younger people. These Breton speakers are treated to seriously limited and inconsistent Breton broadcast media: 4-5 minutes of daily news transmitted by the state-run regional TV, and a 45 minute general interest programme on Sundays, all at off-peak hours. There is no monolingual public radio, but state-owned Breton regional stations do transmit 2-14 hours per week in Breton, while some local radio stations such as *Radio Kreiz Breizh* transmit 20 hours a week in Breton, and *Radio Bro Gwened* 17 hours.

Status

During World War I contact with the rest of France introduced a shame of the language amongst Breton speakers. It became associated with ill-educated peasants, while French was seen as the language of the towns, and of escape from the poorer parts of Brittany. During World War 2, Breton language was tarnished by right-wing anti-French groups who allied themselves with the Nazis, and who after the war found refuge in Germany or Ireland. Today, through activities of militants and musicians, Breton's status is reviving, and it has become fashionable amongst the younger generation to learn Breton and make Breton music. *Festou Noz* and *Diez* – festivals of night and day - are flourishing in Brittany.

Education

Breton has been permitted as a subject since 1951, but only optional, and usually outside regular school hours. The most recent data suggests that a mere 2% of school children in Brittany receive some form of Breton teaching; the first Breton language teacher qualified only in 1992.

Corsican

Media availability

253,992 people live in Corsica; it is possible that 10% of them speak Corsican as their first language. They are able to read very few newspapers in Corsican – and those that do exist such as *Scontru* have a tiny circulation – under 5000. Some periodicals such as *U Ribombu* (circulation 20,000) are partly written in Corsican. *Radio Corsica Frequenza Mora*, a regional radio station of Radio France, broadcasts around 30 hours a week in Corsican, with listening figures of around 30%, though the use of Corsican is limited to discussion and record programmes. Television is limited to 40 minutes per week in Corsican on *France 3 Corse*, and this has very high audience ratings.

Status

In Corsica the problem of low prestige, of peasant associations, has been exacerbated by emigration to the French mainland, and an immigration of Francophone tourists and second-homers. Like Occitan, Corsican is dismissed by the French as a mere *patois* (Occitan as a *patois* of French, Corsican of Italian). Anghjulu Orati, a Corsican teacher and poet, writes in Corsican, but amongst his friends converses in French. He admits that this is regrettable, but that French now seems more natural.

Education

The Diexonne Act was not extended to Corsica until 1974 since the French state considered Corsican as to be a non-native dialect derived from Italian, and not an independent indigenous language in its own right. Today, only certain nursery schools include optional Corsican lessons, while some primary schools do have the option of teaching Corsican for 3 hours per week if enough pupils request it. In secondary schools some 20% of children study Corsican but only for 1-3 hours per week.

Political support

France has always followed an aggressive policy of Francisation. In recent years militants have fought for increased use of the language in schools and media, with extremists demanding that Corsican language teaching be made compulsory. Violence has alienated some more moderate Corsican activists, such as Corsican poet, musician and teacher Anghjulu Orati. As in Brittany and the Basque Country, there are probably well-founded suspicions that many acts of violence have been perpetrated by the French security services in order to discredit the nationalist movement.

Sardinian

Media availability

There is little reliable data for the number of speakers of Sardinian, which in itself is telling, but those with some command of the language number c. 1.3 million, making it the largest linguistic minority in Italy. Nevertheless, there is no daily press in Sardinian. There are a few Sardinian cultural or linguistic periodicals, but use of Sardinian on radio or TV is very rare, with the exception of a few local private radio stations.

Status

Sardinian has always been associated with backward, rural life, while Italian became the socially prestigious language, associated with modern urban life, power and social advancement. Tiziano Fancello, a young well educated Sardinian from Dorgali, can see no purpose in speaking Sardinian, since there is no work for a graduate like her in Sardinia. Her only hope of finding a job is in Rome or Milan, where Sardinian can only be a hindrance. Her fondness for her mother tongue is purely folkloric, for the tourists. By contrast many Sardinians are proud of their 'good' Italian, claiming that the Sardinian accent is the 'most pure' in Italy. The result is an asymmetrical diglossia, in which Italian dominates on every level.

Education

Sardinian plays a minimal role in schooling. There are no textbooks or other learning materials in Sardinian, and a complete shortage of teachers speaking Sardinian. Instead, rigorous promotion of compulsory schooling in Italian has left Sardinian floundering.

Political support

Sardinian is officially a regional language under the protection of the Italian State, but the precise nature of this protection has never been defined, and is certainly not manifested on the ground. There is a tiny nationalist movement but, according to Tiziana Fancello, most people are more concerned with getting a job than saving their language.

Conclusion

It is clear that where the status of the language is high, and education in or of that language encouraged, a media can flourish.

However, neither can flourish without political and financial support. Not one of France's minority tongues, nor Sardinian, are protected or encouraged by law, nor are any legal sanctions in place to insist the media in using the local tongue. Those languages that are supported by law (Basque and Catalan in Spain, Ladin in Bolzano Province, and above all Finland Swedish as spoken in the Åland Islands) demonstrate how successful legal intervention can be. The Ålands see themselves as a model for other minorities or autonomous regions throughout the world.

Attempts by the Council of Europe to persuade national governments to support their minority languages, *including ensuring the right to access and use the media*, has achieved moderate success. The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages is in force in the majority of EU states; however, it is telling that it has still not been ratified by France or Italy.

And as the Sami situation has shown, there is no point in passing legislation if there is not the will to put it into practice.

Ironically, it is the growing globalisation of the media that has increased communication between speakers of lesser-used languages. It enables them to act together to further their causes, particularly through EU bodies such as the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages.

However, such communication has also revealed the discrepancies between them. The Sami, for example, envy the Åland Islands, the Bretons envy the Welsh, and the Basques envy the Catalans.

Each responds in a different but revealing way. The Basques, Corsicans and Bretons have responded with violence, as did the German-speakers of the South Tyrol in the 1980s. The Ladin use their economic muscle, the Catalans their economic and political muscle. The Sami have carried out peaceful but effective protests, and all have created pressure groups to increase access to the media, and to standardize their languages, although in my experience the Occitan-speakers seemed the most indifferent, and the Frisians the most pragmatic.

The future

French Basques, some less hardline Spanish Basques, Bretons and Frisians hope the EU will provide the crucial services that their Governments ignore. However, in the context of the EU budget for languages as a whole, funding for minority languages is miniscule. Politically, many peoples such as the Sami, Basques, Catalans and Frisians, will benefit from the Schengen Agreement, ratified by most EU states in 1997, which has brought down frontiers between nation states within the EU, enabling peoples speaking the same language to get together across borders culturally, politically and economically in a way that they have been unable to do for hundreds of years.

New technology can help this trans-national interchange. For example, *Sami Info*, a teletext service and interactive newspaper, can bring the local tongue into peoples' homes, however sparsely are distributed, and however much they spread over different nation states.

More significantly, computer software is being devised that can translate text automatically, enabling speakers of different languages to communicate directly but in their own tongue. This may counteract the dominance of English in the global media. However, this software is still at the early stages of development, and deeply inefficient. Universal Translator 2000 (available in the UK from Viking Direct) and Systran (available free on babelfish) both attempt to provide 'gist' translations, but you need to install a character recognition package first, and a scanner. It is still more effective to send text to a human being.

Finally...

Speakers of endangered languages within the EU have choices: they can choose passive assimilation, allowing their cultures and languages to die. They can stand by and yawn. Or they can fight to save them. But there is a third way. It is adaptability, assimilating a different culture but without surrendering to it. Many people are content to have two selves – Breton *and* French, Sami *and* Finnish, North Frisian *and* German. Most (except extremists) see a value in this. It is possible that the EU – with its two-way pull between centralism and regionalism, centrifugal and centripetal, and its political and financial muscle – is the way forward.

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Euromosaic on http://www.uoc.es/euromosaic

Foundation for Endangered Languages

Manifesto

1. Preamble

1.1. The Present Situation

At this point in human history, most human languages are spoken by exceedingly few people. And that majority, the majority of languages, is about to vanish.

The most authoritative source on the languages of the world (Ethnologue, Grimes 1996) lists just over 6,500 living languages. Population figures are available for just over 6,000 of them (or 92%). Of these 6,000, it may be noted that:

- 52% are spoken by fewer than 10,000 people;
- 28% by fewer than 1,000; and
- 83% are restricted to single countries, and so are particularly exposed to the policies of a single government.

At the other end of the scale, 10 major languages, each spoken by over 109 million people, are the mother tongues of almost half (49%) of the world's population.

More important than this snapshot of proportions and populations is the outlook for survival of the languages we have. Hard comparable data here are scarce or absent, often because of the sheer variety of the human condition: a small community, isolated or bilingual, may continue for centuries to speak a unique language, while in another place a populous language may for social or political reasons die out in little more than a generation. Another reason is that the period in which records have been kept is too short to document a trend: e.g. the Ethnologue has been issued only since 1951. However, it is difficult to imagine many communities sustaining serious daily use of a language for even a generation with fewer than 100 speakers: yet at least 10% of the world's living languages are now in this position.

Some of the forces which make for language loss are clear: the impacts of urbanization, Westernization and global communications grow daily, all serving to diminish the self-sufficiency and self-confidence of small and traditional communities. Discriminatory policies, and population movments also take their toll of languages.

In our era, the preponderance of tiny language communities means that the majority of the world's languages are vulnerable not just to decline but to extinction.

1.2. The Likely Prospect

There is agreement among linguists who have considered the situation that over half of the world's languages are moribund, i.e. not effectively being passed on to the next generation. We and our children, then, are living at the point in human history where, within perhaps two generations, most languages in the world will die out.

This mass extinction of languages may not appear immediately life-threatening. Some will feel that a reduction in numbers of languages will ease communication, and perhaps help build nations, even global solidarity. But it has been well pointed out that the success of humanity in colonizing the planet has been due to our ability to develop cultures suited for survival in a variety of environments. These cultures have everywhere been transmitted by languages, in oral traditions and latterly in written literatures. So when language transmission itself breaks down, especially before the advent of literacy in a culture, there is always a large loss of inherited knowledge.

Valued or not, that knowledge is lost, and humanity is the poorer. Along with it may go a large part of the pride and self-identity of the community of former speakers.

And there is another kind of loss, of a different type of knowledge. As each language dies, science, in linguistics, anthropology, prehistory and psychology, loses one more precious source of data, one more of the diverse and unique ways that the human mind can express itself through a language's structure and vocabulary.

We cannot now assess the full effect of the massive simplification of the world's linguistic diversity now occurring. But language loss, when it occurs, is sheer loss, irreversible and not in itself creative. Speakers of an endangered language may well resist the extinction of their traditions, and of their linguistic identity. They have every right to do so. And we, as scientists, or concerned human beings, will applaud them in trying to preserve part of the diversity which is one of our greatest strengths and treasures.

1.3. The Need for an Organization

We cannot stem the global forces which are at the root of language decline and loss.

But we can work to lessen the ignorance which sees language loss as inevitable when it is not, and does not properly value all that will go when a language itself vanishes.

We can work to see technological developments, such as computing and telecommunications, used to support small communities and their traditions rather than to supplant them.

And we can work to lessen the damage:

- by recording as much as possible of the languages of communities which seem to be in terminal decline;
- by emphasizing particular benefits of the diversity still remaining; and
- by promoting literacy and language maintenance programmes, to increase the strength and morale of the users of languages in danger.

In order to further these aims, there is a need for an autonomous international organization which is not constrained or influenced by matters of race, politics, gender or religion. This organization will recognise in language issues the principles of self-determination, and group and individual rights. It will pay due regard to economic, social, cultural, community and humanitarian considerations. Although it may work with any international, regional or local Authority, it will retain its independence throughout. Membership will be open to those in all walks of life.

2. Aims and Objectives

The Foundation for Endangered Languages exists to support, enable and assist the documentation, protection and promotion of endangered languages. In order to do this, it aims:-

(i) To raise awareness of endangered languages, both inside and outside the communities where they are spoken, through all channels and media;

(ii) To support the use of endangered languages in all contexts: at home, in education, in the media, and in social, cultural and economic life;

(iii) To monitor linguistic policies and practices, and to seek to influence the appropriate authorities where necessary;

(iv) To support the documentation of endangered languages, by offering financial assistance, training, or facilities for the publication of results;

(v) To collect together and make available information of use in the preservation of endangered languages;

(vi) To disseminate information on all of the above activities as widely as possible.